

LITHUANIA

in 1939-1940

*The historic
turn
to socialism*



MINTIS VILNIUS 1976

Edited, with an Introduction
and Comments by
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Витаутас Антанович Канцявичюс
ЛИТВА В 1939—1940 гг.
На английском языке
Перевели с литовского М. Гинзбургас,
Б. Кишките, Н. Янсонене
Изд-во «Минтис» Литовской ССР, г. Вильнюс, 1975 г.

LITHUANIA IN 1939-1940

Vertė: M. Ginzburgas, N. Jansonienė, B. Kiškytė
Redaktoriai: J. Butkus, A. Medonis
Dailininkas V. Žilius, Meninis redaktorius R. Dichavičius
Techn. redaktorė V. Čečytė, Korektorė Z. Marys
Duota rinkti 1975.VI.27. Pasirašyta spausdinti 1975.XII.1. LV 16695.
Popierius: spaudos Nr. 1, form. $84 \times 108 \frac{1}{32}$. 12,18 sp. l.+0,21 sp. l. įklju,
12,76 apsk. l. l.+0,1 apsk. l. l. įklju. Tiražas 2000 egz. Kaina 78 kp.
Leidykla „Mintis“, Vilnius, Sierakausko g. 15.
Spausdino „Pergalės“ sp., Vilnius, Latako g. 6. Užsak. Nr. 2045.

L $\frac{0164-003}{M851(10)-76}$ 83—75

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INTRODUCTION

Lithuania is one of the fifteen Soviet republics. It joined the USSR in 1940. In the west it clings to the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea, on the north it is bordered by the Latvian SSR, on the east and the south by the Byelorussian SSR, on the south-west by the Polish People's Republic and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. Lithuania has an area of 65,200 square kilometres and its population is over 3.2 million (1975). The capital of Lithuania is Vilnius (since 1323) with more than 430 thousand inhabitants.

Between 1795 and 1915 Lithuania was part of the tsarist Russian Empire. During World War I (1915-1918) the country was occupied by the troops of Kaiser Germany. After the Great October Socialist Revolution which brought freedom to the nations of the Russian Empire, the Lithuanian people rose to fight for its social and national liberation. At the end of 1918 the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic was established. It existed, however, about half a year. The Soviet power in Lithuania was suppressed by foreign forces — German and Polish army units — together with the armed forces of the local reactionaries. The power of the bourgeoisie prevailed in the country, and the bourgeois Lithuanian state emerged (1919-1940). Its territory till 1939 bordered on Germany, Poland and Latvia. At the end of 1939 it had an area of 59.7 thousand square kilometres and a population of over 2.9 million (without

the Klaipėda Territory, including the regained part of the Vilnius Region).

The Soviet and the bourgeois statehood of Lithuania differed essentially from each other primarily in their social basis and matter. The Soviet statehood of Lithuania in 1918-1919 was based on the working class, the broad masses of working people and defended their interests. It was established as a result of the revolutionary struggle of the broad masses for social and national liberation, having abolished the system of exploitation. Whereas the bourgeois statehood of Lithuania emerged after the achievements of the working people had been drowned in blood; it resulted from the efforts of the privileged classes to take the dominant position in the country. It was supported by the military counter-revolutionary forces launched by the Allied Powers against Soviet Russia. At that time the Western powers wanted bourgeois Lithuania to serve as a buffer-state between themselves and the Soviet Union and a kind of base for anti-Soviet actions. The latter circumstance determined the dependence of bourgeois Lithuania upon the Western powers.

In 1938 Lithuania found itself in the vortex of the Munich policy and became one of the focuses of international conflicts. In pursue of its predatory aims, Hitler Germany resolved to keep a firm hand on Lithuania and exploit it as a spring-board for an eventual attack on the Soviet Union. Thus Lithuania was threatened with a danger of Nazi aggression. In the spring of 1939, Hitler tore under coercion the Klaipėda Territory from Lithuania and threatened to seize the whole of Lithuania. In the circumstance Lithuania was faced with the necessity to promptly mobilize all her forces for the struggle against the danger of Nazi aggression and to orient herself to the Soviet Union and its anti-Munich policy. Broad sections of the population looked upon the Soviet Union as a re-

liable and natural ally as it was also threatened with Hitler aggression.

The signing of the Non-Aggression Treaty between the Soviet Union and Germany on August 23, 1939, prevented the formation of a united anti-Soviet front and weakened the position of imperialism and of all the enemies of communism in general. It had repercussions in Lithuania as well. The Lithuanian bourgeoisie came to realize that the contradictions between Germany, Britain and France as well as between the latter states and the Soviet Union were impairing its international and internal position. This made the ruling circles to be more flexible in their foreign policy and to orient themselves to the Soviet Union.

This line of conduct was prompted both by the international situation and by historical experience. The Soviet Union was the first among the great powers to recognize Lithuania's political sovereignty. As far back as July 12, 1920, Soviet Russia signed the Peace Treaty with Lithuania according to which Vilnius and the region of Vilnius (at that time occupied by Poland) were recognized as part and parcel of Lithuanian territory. In October 1926, Lithuania and the Soviet Union signed the Non-Aggression Treaty. In 1927, a firm stand taken by the Soviet state prevented the Polish reactionaries from attacking Lithuania. The diplomatic interference of the USSR saved Lithuania from an aggression harboured by the same Polish circles in the spring of 1938. Every time the Lithuanian people found itself in a critical situation, the USSR would invariably extend it a helping hand, warn the aggressors and prevent them from achieving their aims. In the autumn of 1939, these facts were given publicity even by the bourgeois press in Lithuania.

The Mutual Assistance Treaty concluded between the USSR and Lithuania on October 10, 1939, was also based on the principles of international collective security and neighbourly friendship. It was only thanks to this treaty

that Lithuania did not fall into the clutches of Nazi aggressors.

It was not by chance, therefore, that in the spring of 1940 the attitude towards the Mutual Assistance Treaty became the pivotal issue both in the internal strife of various social and political forces and in the foreign policy. The struggle between the supporters of two different political trends — those orienting themselves to Nazi Germany and to the socialist Soviet Union — was intensifying.

The reactionary circles and the extreme nationalistic forces were decidedly against the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Treaty. Those circles cherished secret hopes to tie Lithuania somehow or other to Nazi Germany and subsequently even to join the latter in the war against the USSR. Plans of this kind were dangerous both to Lithuania and the Soviet Union.

The working class, peasantry, democratic intelligentsia and other progressive forces of the community resolutely supported the Mutual Assistance Treaty and were determined to preserve it. They realized that only this course of policy could guarantee Lithuania's independence, create conditions for the social, economical and cultural progress in the country. The Lithuanian Communist Party called on all the working people to fight against the Government's pro-Nazi orientation in its foreign policy. At the same time the working people were called to intensify their struggle for a democratic system in Lithuania.

On June 14, 1940, the Soviet Government put forward a number of demands which aimed at preserving the Mutual Assistance Treaty. A situation arose which affected the class political interests both of the ruling circles and the broad masses. The working people led by the Communist Party backed the Soviet Government's demands and the measures taken to secure the Mutual Assistance Treaty. Due to the position of the progressive officers headed by Commander of the Army General Vitkauskas,

the Lithuanian Army was also in favour of preserving the Mutual Assistance Treaty and friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

Receiving no aid from abroad and having lost the support of the army, the reaction was unable to prevent the revolutionary changes in the country. This enabled the working people to overthrow the reactionary regime without bloodshed, to form the People's Government in Lithuania, to restore Soviet power and to establish the socialist system. Thus a peaceful socialist revolution took place in Lithuania in 1940.

One of the characteristic features of this revolution consisted in the fact that the revolutionary anti-fascist forces carried out major political and economic rearrangements by constitutional means. The establishment of the People's Government was based on the laws which had been in force before it was formed. All sections of the state apparatus were used to effect political and social changes that satisfied the interests of the working people.

The choice of the socialist way of development involved many complicated problems. The unemployment inherited from the bourgeois regime had to be eliminated, measures for a rapid progress of industry and agriculture, for improving the material and cultural standards of the people were to be envisaged. All these objects were impossible to achieve in an isolated backward agrarian country, on the basis of its own resources alone. Therefore, in the first weeks after the fall of the reactionary regime in Lithuania, broad sections of the working people supported a rapprochement with the Soviet Union and backed the efforts to join the commonwealth of Soviet republics.

The change of the state system was effected by the People's Seimas elected on democratic grounds. It discussed the ways and means for the establishment of socialism

in Lithuania. Expressing the will of the people, on July 21, 1940, the Seimas adopted a resolution on Lithuania's entrance into the Soviet Union.

* * *

The present book contains archive documents and press reports on the historic events in Lithuania in the period of 1939-1940. Not a few documents are published for the first time, after they have been made available by the Central State Archives of the Lithuanian SSR, the archives of the Institute of the Party History at the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party and of other research institutions.

The documents are divided into three chapters and placed in chronological order. Each chapter begins with an introduction that reviews the events covered by the documents.

Part of the documents are published in an abridged form. The omissions are either not essential or similar to the passages given in other documents. The omissions are marked by three spaced periods. The headlines of the documents have been written by the editor of the collection.

Each document is followed by a remark denoting the source. The abbreviations stand for: CVA — Central State Archives of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, PII PA — Archives of the Institute of the Party History at the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party.

The editor of the present publication is indebted to the aforementioned institutions for providing him with documentary material. He wishes to express his gratitude to Boleslovas Baranauskas and Mindaugas Tamošiūnas who reviewed this book in manuscript.

CHAPTER I

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

On March 18, 1938, the top secret Directive No. 472/38 was issued to the German Armed Forces to invade the western part of Lithuania — the Klaipėda Territory. The land forces of the Reich, supported by the aviation and the fleet, without any additional mobilization had to occupy rapidly the Klaipėda Territory and other points in western Lithuania. *

To carry out the directive, the German troops stationed in East Prussia were put on the alert. Under the pretext of military exercises, the SS and SA shock mechanized units were moved to the Lithuanian border, German military aircraft made flights over the Klaipėda Territory and other places of Lithuania.

The draft directive on the invasion of Czechoslovakia, issued on July 7, 1938, stated again that Germany did not give up her intentions to occupy the Klaipėda Territory. The attitude towards this question was to be based on the above directive. **

On October 1, 1938, Hitler tore off the Sudetes Region from Czechoslovakia. Germany put pressure on Lithuania to surrender the Klaipėda Territory. Reports of Germany's intention to occupy the Klaipėda Territory were received in Kaunas from various sources. The matter was dealt with in the messages sent to the Ministry of Foreign

* *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik, 1918-1945* ("Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945"). (Baden-Baden, Frankfurt am Main, 1961), Series D, Vol. VII, p. 551; Vol. V, p. 365.

** *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal* (Nuremberg, 1947-49), Vol. XXV, pp. 448-450.

Affairs by the Lithuanian ministers in Germany and France and other countries. The Lithuanian Military Attaché in Berlin Colonel Grinius arrived in Kaunas and personally informed President Smetona and some other Government members of Germany's intentions to invade the Klaipėda Territory.

On October 21, 1938, Hitler and Keitel signed Directive No. 236/38 on the occupation of the whole Czechoslovakia and the Klaipėda Region. Section 3 of the Directive — The Occupation of the Klaipėda Region — stated that the political situation might set the German Armed Forces the task to occupy the Klaipėda Region. In this connection, they were to be guided by the 1938 Directive No. 472/38 and to act in a way ensuring the performance of the operation in the shortest time possible.*

Head of the Northern Department of the British Foreign Office, Collier, said to the Lithuanian Minister in London Balutis on December 13, 1938, that taking into consideration Britain's present policy, he was of the opinion that in case the Germans attempted to occupy the Klaipėda Region, Lithuania had better leave it. On December 20, 1938, the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs received a telegram from Balutis to the effect that Britain was not to be expected to give Lithuania any active assistance except diplomatic.** Like Czechoslovakia, Lithuania was left to the mercy of Germany.

The USSR exposed Nazi Germany's plans to occupy the Klaipėda Territory and denounced the policy of the aggressors. *Pravda*, the central newspaper of the Soviet Union, wrote that the German fascism was determined to choose Lithuania as next of its victims, that neither the aggressors nor their accomplices could ever conceal the tragic consequences that would befall small nations as a result of the policy pursued by the Munich plotters and those capitulating to German fascism.***

* Ibidem, Vol. XXXV, pp. 483-484.

** CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 14; f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 9.

*** *Pravda*, November 14, 1938.

On March 15, 1939, Nazi Germany, with the connivance of Britain and France, occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia. On March 19, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs Ribbentrop summoned the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Urbšys and demanded in the form of an ultimatum that Lithuania cede the Klaipėda Region of her own and transfer it to Germany. Besides, he threatened that unless the demand was met or if there was any delay, the matter would be settled by the German troops.

On his return from Germany, Urbšys informed the Government of Germany's demand, adding that he had promised to give the Germans a prompt reply.

At the meeting of the Lithuanian Government held on March 21, 1939, it was decided to cede the Klaipėda Region to Germany. Urbšys hurriedly went to Berlin to sign the agreement on the transfer of the Klaipėda Region to Germany.

At that time, Hitler was sailing to Klaipėda on board the cruiser *Deutschland*, accompanied by a whole flotilla, to review the German troops in Klaipėda. Ribbentrop, who had remained in Berlin, was in a hurry to report to Hitler on board the ship that the issue of the Klaipėda Region was already settled. Thus Urbšys had to sign the agreement on the transfer of the Klaipėda Region to Germany hurriedly without making any changes in the draft treaty dictated by the Nazis. Two signatories of the Klaipėda Convention — Japan and Italy — approved of this act of Nazi aggression. Among the ruling circles of Britain and France this event had no other repercussions except sympathy for Lithuania. The Soviet Union alone resolutely denounced the German aggression against Lithuania and the connivance of Britain, France, Italy, and Japan with the aggressor.

The loss of the Klaipėda Territory had a considerable effect on Lithuania's political and economical life. The anti-fascist activities of the masses were stirred up. All these events caused a government crisis, and the Mironas Government resigned. A coalition government headed by

Brig Gen Černius was formed. It was to consolidate the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, to repair its shaky rule.

The port of Klaipėda had been the only sea outlet for Lithuania. Its loss told badly on Lithuania's economy. All of a sudden, the prices of imported goods rose while the profits from exports shrank. With the loss of the Klaipėda Territory, Lithuania was deprived of a considerable part of her industrial enterprises. The Germans "freezed" the capital invested in the port facilities and did not return it. Lithuania's economic stability was considerably impaired. Shortage of capital made the sealing of the gaps in the country's economy an insoluble problem. It was impossible to balance the state budget. A top secret telegram was sent to the Lithuanian Mission in London in an attempt to raise a loan in Britain. Lithuania asked for a loan of 3 million pounds to support the currency and the national economy in general. Besides, the Legacy was requested to make inquiries if there was any possibility to get money for arms, too. *

The loan was not granted, as the international situation was deteriorating and was regarded to be unfavourable for investing foreign capital in Lithuania.

The Nazi-dictated treaty on the transfer of Klaipėda Region to Germany obliged Lithuania to refrain from joining any system of collective security directed against Germany. Consequently, Lithuania's security and her resistance to further aggressive designs of the Nazis were undermined. The new Government did not denounce the aggressive policy of the Nazis towards Lithuania. Thus it helped legitimate in the eyes of the world the treaty on the transfer of Klaipėda.

The Lithuanian Communist Party intensified its activity in defence of Lithuania's independence. In its appeal to the broad public, the Communist Party pointed out that Lithuania continued to be threatened with German aggression. All sections of the population were called to rally their strength in the face of this danger. The appeal stated:

* CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 4.

"We must be on our guard to avoid the fate of Czechoslovakia"; "Passivity cannot save Lithuania. Brace up the confidence of the people in its own strength, the resolution to sacrifice our lives for Lithuania. Only a united nation, determined to defend itself, can preserve the independence."

On March 25, 1939, the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party sent all the Party district committees instructions urging the Communists to set up independence defence committees without delay and to enhance the resolution of the nation to resist aggression.

On March 27, *Lietuvos žinios*, the newspaper of the liberal circles, carried an appeal of the Association of Volunteer Founders of the Lithuanian Army addressed to the broad public. The appeal stressed that, after the loss of the Klaipėda Territory, Lithuania remained under the threat of Nazi aggression. The public was called to immediately organize the patriotic front and to rally the nation to resist the new aggression. The Lithuanian Communist Party approved of the ideas expressed in the appeal and called the people to unite in the patriotic front to defend the national independence. On the initiative of the Communists, meetings of the working people were held to establish the patriotic front. In its letter of April 1 to the local Party organizations, the Central Committee of the Communist Party elaborated the organization of the committees and branches of the patriotic front. It also stressed that the Communists would support the Government's measures to defend Lithuania's independence. *

In those ominous days the Communist Party urged the Government to show more concern for the strengthening of the armed forces, demanded to arm the masses for the struggle against the Nazi aggression. At the same time the Communist Party resolutely denounced further concessions to Hitler Germany and called the Government to rely in its struggle against the aggressor on the policy of collective security and the Soviet Union — the main guarantor of this policy.

* CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 4-5.

At the 1938 autumn session of the League of Nations, the Lithuanian representative declared that in future Lithuania would not consider herself bound by Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations under which she, like other League members, was obliged to render assistance to the country attacked by an aggressor. This, in fact, was withdrawal from the policy of collective security. On December 29, 1938, the Lithuanian Council of Ministers approved of and introduced into the Seimas the bill of neutrality law. On January 10, 1939, it was passed at the extraordinary Seimas session.

The Soviet Union, striving for collective security and collective sanctions against aggressors, disapproved of Lithuania's withdrawal from the policy of collective security. The Lithuanian Communist Party also disapproved the policy of the Government. The *Tiesa* (organ of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party) stressed that under the circumstances, when the aggressor was permitted to ignore the rights of smaller states, neutrality was of no use. Repudiation of the policy of collective security served but the aggressors' purposes. *

On April 11, 1939, Hitler issued a directive to make preparations for war against Poland. It stressed that relations between Germany and the smaller states would depend on Germany's military needs, that eventually Germany might be obliged to occupy them and annex their territories to the Reich. **

As the attack of the Nazi hordes against Poland was approaching, Germany proposed to Lithuania to become her ally and thus regain the region of Vilnius occupied by Poland in 1920. The proposal was made at the end of August, 1939, through Erich Zechlin, the German Minister to Lithuania, Weizsäcker, State Secretary of the German Foreign Ministry, and Colonel Just, German Military Attaché in Lithuania. With this aim in view, the latter paid a few visits to General Raštikis, Commander of the Lith-

* *Tiesa*, November 1, 1938.

** *Trial of the War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 381-389, 388-396.

uanian Army, and General Musteikis, Minister of Defence, to inform them that the German High Command was ready to support Lithuania's attack on Vilnius by aircraft, armour and heavy artillery. Kazys Škirpa, the Lithuanian Minister in Berlin, was approached on the matter several times by Kleist, Ribbentrop's Bureau Counsellor.

At the end of August Škirpa discussed the Nazi proposal with Prime Minister Černius and the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Škirpa exerted himself in his attempts to persuade the Lithuanian Government to accept the proposal. He suggested to set up a secret government commission to prepare an attack on Vilnius, to announce mobilization in Lithuania and reject the neutrality policy. Škirpa's efforts, however, were not approved by the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry in Kaunas received messages from the Lithuanian Ministers to France (P. Klimas) and Great Britain (K. B. Balutis) advising to act with great caution in the matter of Poland, to avoid alliance with Germany and remain neutral.* As allies of Poland, Great Britain and France threatened Lithuania with war and expulsion of Lithuanian missions from London and Paris in the event of her alliance with Germany against Poland. The Soviet Union, too, warned Lithuania against any involvements in the ventures of fascist Germany.**

On September 1, 1939, the day Poland was attacked by Germany, the Lithuanian Government made a statement to notify that Lithuania would observe neutrality in this conflict.***

Having penetrated deep into Poland, the Nazi troops were approaching the Soviet border. The Polish Government was on the verge of disintegration. A new military situation arose in East Europe. The Soviet Government took measures to prevent the German advance to the

* CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 17, 18-19.

** *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, Series D, Vol. VII, (Washington, 1956), p. 56.

*** *Vyriausybės žinios*, p. 1, September 1, 1939.

western border of the USSR, and the occupation of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia. The Soviet troops moved into these territories. Together with Western Byelorussia, the region of Vilnius seized by the Polish militarists in 1920, was now under the protection of the Soviet Union. Thus Lithuania was afforded an opportunity to regain Vilnius from the hands of the USSR by peaceful means.

So Germany, failing to entangle Lithuania in her military designs, took new steps. On September 19 and 20, the Lithuanian Minister Škirpa was summoned to the German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop to the German High Command at Sopot. On September 21, Ribbentrop invited through Škirpa the Lithuanian Foreign Minister Urbšys to pay an urgent visit to him.

At the meeting of the Lithuanian Government held on September 22, it was decided to accept the invitation. The instructions drafted for Urbšys-Ribbentrop negotiations stressed Lithuania's neutrality.

Notifying the German Minister Zechlin of the Lithuanian Government's attitude towards Ribbentrop's invitation, Urbšys expressed his wish to be informed of its aim and suggested to issue a communique on the matter. Urbšys also told Zechlin that during the talks with Ribbentrop Lithuania's determination to preserve neutrality with regard to the belligerents and maintain good relations with all her neighbours would be reiterated. Besides, Urbšys informed the Soviet Minister to Lithuania Pozdniakov of the invitation.

Such an attitude of the Lithuanian Government was unacceptable to Ribbentrop. Urbšys's visit, therefore, was postponed.

While inviting Urbšys, the Nazis had already made a draft on the "Defence Treaty Between the German Reich and the Lithuanian Republic". During the meeting they intended to propose to sign the treaty. Article 1 of the draft declared that Lithuania placed herself under the protection of the German Reich. Article 2 stated that, in

order to realize the protection, Lithuania and Germany concluded a military convention.*

Bearing in mind that Lithuania might object to such a protection, Germany also planned to occupy her by force. Directive No. 4 signed by Hitler on September 25, 1939, said that the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and the High Command were to make a decision on further military operations in the nearest future. So it was necessary to keep ready in East Prussia forces strong enough to occupy Lithuania quickly even in case of armed resistance.**

Thus the Nazis were planning to impose on Lithuania German protectorate.

On September 26, 1939, the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party issued two appeals which publicly announced that Lithuania was faced with the threat of becoming a German protectorate. The appeals called on the working people, army and the public at large to rally in order to defend Lithuania from being turned into a German protectorate.***

On the day when the Lithuanian Minister Škirpa was summoned by Ribbentrop, the Lithuanian Council of Ministers instructed the Minister to the Soviet Union Natkevičius to explain to the Soviet Government Lithuania's attitude towards the Vilnius region. Natkevičius did it on the same day. The Soviet Government was notified that the Vilnius region, which then was in the hands of the Soviet Union, was mainly inhabited by Lithuanians and that Lithuania had rights to this territory. The Government of the Soviet Union replied that in principle it intended to transfer Vilnius and Vilnius region to Lithuania.****

* Documents on German Foreign Policy, Series D, Vol. VIII, p. 112.

** W. Hubatsch, *Hitlers Weisungen für die Kriegführung, 1939-1945*. Dokumente des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht. ("Hitler's Directives for Warfare, 1939-1945". Documents of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht) (Frankfurt am Main, 1962), pp. 26-27.

*** *Lietuvos Komunistų partijos atsisaukimai* (Appeals of the Lithuanian Communist Party), Vol. IV, (Vilnius, 1963), pp. 416-418.

**** CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 6; f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 12.

After this the Lithuanian Minister again asked for a meeting with Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Commissar for Foreign Affairs Molotov or his deputy. Following the instructions of the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry, Natkevičius made efforts to the effect that the USSR, in one form or other, would make a statement on the return of Vilnius and the region of Vilnius to Lithuania and on its future policy towards Lithuania.

Natkevičius was received by Molotov on September 29. Molotov declared that the situation arisen in East Europe would inevitably affect the relations between the USSR and Lithuania. The USSR was inclined, therefore, to put them on a concrete and realistic basis. In this connection Molotov expressed his wish to have a meeting with the Lithuanian Prime Minister or Foreign Minister in Moscow to discuss the above questions.

On September 30 Natkevičius arrived in Kaunas. On the same day, at a meeting of the Council of Ministers Natkevičius related the content of his talk with Molotov. At the meeting of the Government held on October 1, it was decided to send Foreign Minister Urbšys to Moscow. The meeting also approved the instructions of the Lithuanian Government for the negotiations in Moscow.

On the day of Urbšys's departure to Moscow, the government semi-official newspaper carried an editorial which stressed that the necessity to discuss certain problems pertaining to the mutual relations between Lithuania and the Soviet Union had arisen in consequence of the changed situation in East Europe and a desire to make some rearrangements in the neighbourly relations.*

In Moscow Urbšys was informed of the Soviet Government's position on the Vilnius issue and the wish to conclude a Soviet-Lithuanian mutual assistance treaty. At the meeting held on October 6, the Lithuanian Government decided to sign the mutual assistance treaty with the Soviet Union. A delegation was appointed to negotiate the mutual assistance treaty. It was headed by Foreign Minister Urbšys.

* *Lietuvos aidas*, October 3, 1939.

During the negotiations in Moscow, Urbšys presented his Government's views on Lithuanian-Soviet relations, noting that the delegation headed by him was authorized by the Lithuanian Government to negotiate for the mutual assistance treaty.

On October 10, 1939, the Treaty on the Transfer of Vilnius and the Region of Vilnius to the Lithuanian Republic and Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance was signed. The Treaty did not affect the political, social and economic systems as well as military measures of the contracting parties. Yet it made provisions that in the event of an attack or in danger of an attack the contracting parties were to render each other every assistance, including military assistance. In order to ensure the security of both countries, it was agreed that the Lithuanian Government allowed to station at certain points in Lithuania a specified number of Soviet land and air armed forces.

The Treaty was submitted to the Seimas for debate. On October 14, 1939, the Seimas gave its consent to the ratification of the Treaty on the Transfer of Vilnius and the Region of Vilnius to the Lithuanian Republic and Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance. It was ratified by President Smetona. On October 16, in Kaunas the two sides exchanged the instruments of ratification.

On October 19, at the meeting of the Lithuanian Council of Ministers Commander of the Army General Raštikis made a report on the negotiations to be held with the Soviet military mission on the location of Soviet garrisons in Lithuania. To this end, a mission was set up by the Lithuanian Government headed by Div Gen Rėklaitis. On October 23, the Lithuanian and the Soviet military missions began talks on the location of the Soviet garrisons in Lithuania. It was decided to station Soviet military garrisons — 18 to 20 thousand troops — at four points in Lithuania. At the same time, regulations covering the relations of the Soviet garrisons with the Lithuanian Army, the civilian administration and the population were discussed.

On October 30, the agreement concluded by the two military missions was approved by the Lithuanian Government. On November 10, Defence Minister Musteikis approved the plan of ceremonies to be held to meet the arriving units of the Soviet Army. A special department for relations with the Soviet garrisons under Div Gen Rėklaitis was set up at the Ministry of Defence. Liaison officers were attached to each garrison.

In mid-October the formation of the Vilnius Brigade was undertaken. It was put under the command of Div Gen Vitkauskas, Commander of the 1st Division. On October 26, he began talks with Commander of the Army Kovalev, head of the Soviet military mission, on the procedure of transferring and taking over Vilnius and the region of Vilnius. On the basis of the agreement achieved, a "plan of the transfer and acceptance of Vilnius" was worked out by the chiefs of staffs. In accordance with it, the units of the Lithuanian Army were to cross the former line of demarcation on October 27 and reach Vilnius, the old Lithuanian capital, on October 28.

The entry of the Lithuanian troops into Vilnius was joyfully hailed by the people of Vilnius and the public at large. The Lithuanian people rejoiced at the fact that the Soviet Union had saved the Vilnius region from the Nazi occupation and was returning it to its real master — Lithuania.

The Mutual Assistance Treaty considerably strengthened Lithuania's position in the complicated international situation of that time. Lithuania was afforded an opportunity to defend herself against Nazi aggression together with the Soviet Union. In accordance with Articles 4 and 5 of the Treaty, the Red Army men were to fight against the aggressor side by side with the soldiers of bourgeois Lithuania, should Lithuania or the Soviet Union — through the Lithuanian territory — be attacked. Thus the Treaty strengthened the security of both Lithuania and the Soviet Union. It meant that the forces which had been seeking to strengthen the position of fascist Germany in Lithuania suffered defeat.

The Lithuanian Communist Party hailed the Mutual Assistance Treaty. It called working people's meetings, gatherings and demonstrations to express approval of the Treaty and gratitude to the Soviet Union for the return of Vilnius and the region of Vilnius.

However, a considerable part of the Lithuanian bourgeoisie, the Polish chauvinists in the Vilnius region and the Germans residing in Lithuania regarded the Treaty with disfavour. It frustrated the anti-Soviet designs in the Baltic Region matured by the Western powers. These countries, therefore, immediately made their counter-moves.

For military and political reasons and due to their obligations to Poland, Great Britain and France did not recognize the transfer of the Vilnius region to Lithuania. This move encouraged the Polish chauvinists in the Vilnius region. Before long, they undertook underground activities directed against Lithuania and the Soviet Union. These activities were coordinated by people working at the British and French missions in Lithuania. Members of this underground organization engaged in espionage, performed acts of sabotage, broadcast anti-Soviet and anti-Lithuanian appeals over a clandestine radio station, ambushed Soviet servicemen belonging to the garrison stationed in the Vilnius region.

Hitler Germany was also dissatisfied with the Lithuanian-Soviet Treaty and the presence of Soviet garrisons on the Lithuanian territory. It was considered — and not without good reason — an impediment to Germany's expansionist policy in the East. The Nazis sought to get information on the Soviet garrisons in Lithuania. In addition to that, they were doing their utmost to expand the network of their agents in Lithuania and mislead with their help the population as to the true intentions of the Third Reich towards Lithuania. The German agents tried to influence, wherever they could, the political life in Lithuania, secretly instigated anti-Soviet activities in the country. The main task of the Nazis in Lithuania was to pave the way for an attack upon the Soviet Union. Therefore, they focused their attention on provoking a military

conflict between the Lithuanian troops and the Soviet garrisons in Lithuania. Such a conflict was to take place at the moment convenient for Germany.

The first among the Lithuanian bourgeoisie to have expressed dissatisfaction with the Mutual Assistance Treaty were the Voldemaras accomplices and some leading members of the ruling Nationalist Party. In view of their political orientation towards Germany, they blamed the Government for rejecting the German proposal to enter the war against Poland. The enemies of the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty found support among the reactionary circles in the Šauliai Association, the army and other bourgeois parties.

The military successes scored by fascist Germany in the West, the operations on the Scandinavian Peninsula complicated the situation in the Baltic Region. The supporters of the German policy in Lithuania were looking forward to Nazi aggression against the Soviet Union and were making preparations for it.

The conviction that the war would prevent Britain and France from succouring the bourgeoisie of Lithuania at the critical moment prompted President Smetona to resume his schemes and seek rapprochement with Germany, which intentions were at variance with the Mutual Assistance Treaty with the Soviet Union. Such behaviour was also stimulated by the hopeless position of the reactionary circles of Lithuania and a real prospect of the victory of the anti-fascist forces in Lithuania. Smetona outlined his plans as follows: the political orientation of the Lithuanian Government to Britain and France is erroneous and even harmful as Britain has already disappointed many countries — Abyssinia, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Besides, Lithuania, as a small state, will not be able to remain self-dependent and preserve a socio-economic system different from that of the neighbouring states and sooner or later she will have to subject her political and economical life to one or other social doctrine. To accept the socialist system would mean to bury ourselves. He thinks therefore that Lithuania has but one way out — to

orient to Germany, to seek ways and means of rapprochement with her.

At the end of February, 1940, the Lithuanian Council of Ministers adopted a secret decision on preparation for an armed conflict with the USSR. The President and the Minister of Defence were authorized to choose people for implementing this decision.

Shortly afterwards, Augustinas Povilaitis, Director of the State Security Department, was sent to Berlin with a mission to specify Germany's political and military intentions towards Lithuania. For this purpose he had to use the usual diplomatic channels and to act unofficially through the Gestapo Command. The State Defence Council and the War Council were considering an eventual military conflict with the USSR. Depending on military and political circumstances on the Western front, especially on the possibility of Germany entering into a compromise agreement with Great Britain on ending the war, it was planned to renounce the Mutual Assistance Treaty and surrender to Germany's protection. Berlin approved of these anti-Soviet activities of the Lithuanian reactionaries.

Before long provocative actions against the Soviet garrisons in Lithuania began. On February 4, 1940, Butayev, a serviceman belonging to the Soviet garrison in Lithuania, was kidnapped. The command of the garrison requested the Lithuanian authorities to find out the kidnappers and help search for Butayev. The investigation of the circumstances took a long time. At last, on May 12, Butayev's body was handed over to the garrison command by the Lithuanian authorities.

On May 18, Shmavgonets, a Soviet tank driver, was kidnapped and interrogated until May 26 with the aim of obtaining military information. On May 24, the same happened to Pisarev, another Soviet serviceman.

On May 25, the Soviet Government handed in the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow a note to the effect that it regarded the kidnapping of Soviet servicemen as an anti-Soviet provocation fraught with grave consequences.

On May 2, Foreign Minister Urbšys handed in the Soviet Minister Pozdniakov an explanation of the Lithuanian Government saying that respective authorities had been instructed to begin a search for the missing Soviet servicemen. On May 27, the Council of Ministers held a meeting to hear a report by Urbšys on the Soviet Government's statement of May 25. A commission of investigation was set up. On May 28 the Soviet Government was informed of it. Two days later the Lithuanian press carried the official statement made by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR on the provocations by the Lithuanian authorities against the Soviet Union. Only then the Lithuanian Government took steps to strengthen police surveillance in the areas where the Soviet military units were stationed and clear them of suspected persons.

At the invitation of the Soviet Government, on June 6, 1940, Lithuanian Prime Minister Merkys went to Moscow. On June 7, 9 and 11 he had talks with Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Molotov. Merkys was reminded of a number of facts pertaining to the violation of the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty, first of all of the provocative actions against the Soviet garrisons, military cooperation between Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and Lithuania's anti-Soviet policy in general. At the same time it was pointed out that, in the opinion of the Soviet Government, Minister of the Interior, Skučas, and Director of the State Security Department, Povilaitis, were directly responsible for the provocations against the Soviet garrisons.

A part of these accusations were not rejected by Merkys. He undertook to dismiss Skučas and Povilaitis from their duties. As to the military alliance of the Baltic States, which the Soviet Union regarded as a disloyalty towards it, he tried to shift the blame on the Latvians and Estonians, who, he said, after a period of cool relations had become inclined to a rapprochement with Lithuania.

The President of Lithuania, his supporters and even the bourgeois opposition were dissatisfied with Merkys

who went into explanations in connection with the charges brought against Lithuania by the Soviet Union and, instead of denying them, was too frank. It was not accidental, therefore, that the country's military commanders then in Moscow — Deputy Minister of Defence General Rėklaitis, head of the Special Department for Relations with the Soviet Garrisons, Chief of the Air Force General Gustaitis, Lithuanian Military Attaché to the Soviet Union Colonel Meškauskas and others — demanded Merkys's immediate resignation from the office of Prime Minister. However, Merkys refused to do that. He told them that such matters were to be settled in Kaunas and not in Moscow.

On June 12 Merkys returned to Kaunas. The press published a communique on the talks with Molotov. On the same day a government meeting was called. Merkys informed the Government that in Moscow he had been strongly reproved for the violations of the Mutual Assistance Treaty, that the Soviet Union was determined to make its demands to the Lithuanian Government. It was also noted that the Soviet Union had expressed its distrust in the Lithuanian Government.

At the time of these developments, President Smetona instructed Minister of Defence Musteikis to get in touch with the German Military Attaché in Lithuania Colonel Just in order to clear up the course of policy Lithuania should follow with regard to the Soviet Union. Just promised to pass this question to his Government.

On June 12, Greffe, an official of the German Gestapo, arrived in Kaunas. He had a meeting with Director of the State Security Department Povilaitis. Germany was interested in the policy the Lithuanian Government was to pursue towards the USSR after Merkys's visit to Moscow. Greffe was also instructed to convey the opinion of German official circles as to what attitude Lithuania should adopt towards the Soviet Union. It was communicated through Greffe that Lithuania had to start preparations for an armed conflict with the Soviet Union. It was added that, in the event of such a conflict, Germany would agree to intern Lithuanian military units on her territory as well

as accept the Government and other persons should they wish to leave Lithuania.

The reply encouraged Smetona. In the evening of June 12, he summoned Commander of the Army General Vitkauskas and reminded him of the decisions taken by the Government and the State Defence Council to the effect that, in the face of serious danger, a military conflict with the USSR should not be avoided, even if there was no hope to hold out. In this connection the President explained to the Commander of the Army the position of Germany in the event of a possible armed conflict with the USSR.

Soon afterwards, General Vitkauskas was visited by the German Military Attaché Colonel Just who informed him that Germany could provide Lithuania with a sufficient quantity of French tanks and artillery taken by the Wehrmacht. Just even hinted that Germany could also give tankmen, only they would have to be dressed in Lithuanian uniforms.* Thus, although indirectly, the Commander of the Lithuanian Army was notified that Germany was for an armed conflict between Lithuania and the USSR.

Following Just's visit, General Vitkauskas had a talk with the Lithuanian Military Attaché in Germany Colonel Grinius who spoke of an armed conflict with the USSR as an inevitability.**

On June 13, Smetona began making preparations for retreat together with the Army and Government to Germany.

At that time, bourgeois opposition groups, acting through their members — Ministers Bizauskas, Masiliūnas, Audėnas and Tamošaitis — were seeking to bring about the fall of the Merkys Government or even a coup d'état which would have made the President and some members of the government go abroad. This would have served as a pretext for revising the relations with the Soviet Union, with Hitler Germany not standing aloof either.

* V. Vitkauskas, „Tą neužmirštamą vasarą“, *Švyturys*, 1960, No. 12, p. 12.

** Ibid.

No. 1

Extract from the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party "On the Present Situation and Immediate Tasks" Adopted at the January Plenary Meeting, 1939.

January 1-2, 1939

1. As a result of the Munich plot, the menace to Lithuania's independence has considerably increased. Although Lithuania is still threatened by Poland, however, the greatest enemy at present is Hitler Germany which is striving to enslave Lithuania by undermining her from within, by 'negotiation' or by direct armed attack. The dominant position of the Nazis in the Klaipėda Territory¹, which is being turned into a base against Lithuania, as well as the plot headed by Hitler's agents — the Voldemaras henchmen² — enhance the danger still more. On the other hand, Lithuania's resistance is weakened by the Smetona-Mironas Government³ which under cover of 'neutrality' is step by step surrendering to Nazi Germany. This attitude has already led to the betrayal of Lithuania's interests in the Klaipėda Territory and intensification of pro-Nazi activities all over Lithuania.

2. Thus at present the Party, while concentrating its attention on combating the Nazi-Voldemaras plot as the main menace to Lithuania's independence, never ceases to fight against the capitulatory policy of the Smetona-Mironas Government which may finally ruin Lithuania's independence. Having in mind Lithuania's precarious international position, the Party does not oppose any manoeuvring which might help win time and strengthen Lithuania's resistance. Yet the Party is strongly opposed to concessions which encroach upon Lithuania's rights and

¹ For explanation of words marked by Arabic numerals see Notes pp. 224-232.

threaten her sovereignty. Our Party has to intensify the struggle for Lithuania's independent foreign policy, which would take advantage of contradictions between capitalist countries, particularly between Germany and Poland, in order to strengthen the international position of Lithuania, which would follow the principles of collective security and be oriented to the recently intensifying movement of nations against the Munich capitulation, and to the Soviet Union above all, for it has always stood up for Lithuania's independence.

3. A policy useful for Lithuania can be ensured only by a government enjoying the support of the broad masses of a free nation. Meanwhile, the fascist Smetona regime, allegedly calling to 'national unity', is resorting to rabid acts of terror against the people, whereas Lithuania's enemies — the Nazi-Voldemaras accomplices — are given a free hand. While combating the Government's terrorist actions against the defenders of Lithuania's independence and demanding to suppress the forces hostile to it, we have to show initiative and vigour in order to rally all the sections of Lithuania's population, regardless of political, national and religious differences, to the fight for a national defence government able to ensure Lithuania's independence, democratic rights and to improve the economic standards of the people....

Resolution of the Plenary Meeting of the LCP Central Committee, 1939, pp. 1-2.

No. 2

Speech of Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Urbšys, at the Seimas Session Debating the Bill of Lithuanian Neutrality Law

January 10, 1939

Esteemed members of the Seimas! The draft neutrality law brought in for debating and the covering letter are clear enough. Apparently, there is no need to give the bill a more detailed consideration.

It is worth mentioning, however, that the Scandinavian countries had introduced such laws even before the World War. . . .

The Scandinavian states have now adapted their prewar neutrality laws to the new present-day requirements and modified them on the basis of their common agreement.

The Scandinavian example has been followed by the three Baltic States — Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia.

The draft of the bill presented for debating today has been drawn jointly by the experts of the three countries and is modelled on analogous laws of the Scandinavian countries. The governments of the three countries have agreed to introduce the bill into their respective legislatures and seek its approval without any alteration. In Estonia and Latvia the bill has already been made law.

The Government requests the Seimas to approve of the bill and, if the Seimas made no objections, to pass it today.

The law itself, its spirit and principles are in full accordance with the course of foreign policy outlined by the Lithuanian Government. As it has been repeatedly declared, Lithuania is determined to follow the policy of neutrality, to wit, do all in her power to stand aloof from conflicts that may arise between other states. The bill put forward to the Seimas is demonstrative of the Government's efforts made to this end. Of course, it is but one of the manifestations of these efforts.

As it has been said in the government declaration, Lithuania is striving to achieve an understanding with her neighbours in order to make no doubts as to her attitude and prevent any incidents that might provoke or offend our neighbours.

Seimas Verbatim Report, 112th Session, January 10, 1939.

No. 3

The Lithuanian Minister in Berlin to the Lithuanian Foreign Minister

March 10, 1939

Documents received by a certain embassy here have disclosed that the Klaipėda region is to be occupied by the German troops before the end of this month.

Besides, the documents have also disclosed that at the same time Danzig is to be seized. However, according to additional information, this action has been postponed.

The authenticity of the documents is unquestionable. . . .

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 3.

No. 4

Excerpt from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of Ministers Held on March 20, 1939, to Discuss the Aggravating Situation in the Klaipėda Territory in Connection with the Intention of Fascist Germany to Occupy it.

. . . The Council of Ministers, having heard the report made by Prime Minister on the political situation in Europe and the threat to the Klaipėda Territory on the part of Germany, decided:

1. To tolerate any decision exceeding the Statute ⁴ made by the Klaipėda Seimelis ⁵ to be convened on the 25th this month or any action exceeding the Statute undertaken by Neumann, leader of the territory's German population, unless and until they represent direct threat to the country's security.

2. To suppress the unrest caused by the German population in the Klaipėda Territory by armed force; in case the repressions provoked an armed interference by Germany, to withdraw the troops without resistance into Lithuania Major and put up resistance there.

3. To consult the governments of Great Britain and France about the danger threatening the Klaipėda Territory and seek their advice.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 14, l. 4.

No. 5

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of Ministers Held on March 21, 1939, to Discuss the Cession of the Klaipėda Territory to Germany

... Foreign Minister J. Urbšys has informed:

German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop made a statement on March 20 of this year to the effect that the Klaipėda Territory had been detached from Germany by the Versailles Treaty contrary to the right of nations to self-determination. Subsequently the territory was occupied by the French, later by Lithuanian troops. Such injustice could take place and be tolerated only as long as Germany was powerless (ohnmächtig). Presently the situation had changed and the Klaipėda Territory had to be restored to the Reich. If the Lithuanian Government returned the Klaipėda Territory by agreement, the German Government would be ready to act generously (großzügig) and meet Lithuania's interests concerning the port of Klaipėda. Yet, if the Lithuanian Government refused to follow this wise course of action, the Klaipėda Territory would be returned to Germany otherwise. If clashes broke out there and a single German were killed, the matter would be handled not by us, politicians, but by the troops who, once they had started marching, no one knew where they would stop. In case of military actions, the German Government would not enter into any negotiations. Besides, in reply to Mr. Urbšys's inquiry, von Ribbentrop stressed that he could not fix any date for the reply. It should be borne in mind, however, that the Seimelis was to be convened on March 25, and eventually a situation might arise in which a peaceful settlement of the issue

might be too late. In his speech von Ribbentrop repeatedly stressed that Germany had no other aspirations concerning the Lithuanian people (Großdeutschland hat ja keine andere Aspirationen auf das litauische Volk). The Lithuanian Foreign Minister promised von Ribbentrop to inform his Government about the demand made by the German Government and give a speedy reply.

The Council of Ministers, having discussed the situation and seeing no other way out, deems it is forced to meet the demand of the German Government.

In reply to the demand of the German Government, a protest is handed in, too. Stasys Lozoraitis, Lithuanian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Quirinal, is charged with drafting the protest.

In the face of the menace on the part of Germany, the Council of Ministers has no possibility to meet the engagements ensuing from Article 15 of the Klaipėda Convention⁶, signed by Lithuania, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. Minister of Foreign Affairs is charged to inform the French and British Ministers in Kaunas about the demand made by the German Government to return the Klaipėda Territory to the Reich.

The meeting began at two o'clock, ended at seven o'clock.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 14, l. 6-7.



LIETUVOS AIDAS

№ 131 (4333)

TERŠIADUOMI, KOVO 12.

LIETUVOS AIDAS

TERŠIADUOMI, KOVO 12.



1939 (XIV) m.

Vokietijos reikalavimai Lietuvai

VOKIETIJOS REIKALAVIMAI LIETUVAI

Grįžęs kovo 31 d. į Kauną, užsienio reikalų ministras Tarasas Stasys Lozoraitis, Ministras Tarybų, pasirašė nuo 16 val. 10 min. savo paslaiką...

Daš vokietų reikalavimų

Agis Lietuvos užsienio reikalų ministras Tarasas Stasys Lozoraitis, Ministras Tarybų, pasirašė nuo 16 val. 10 min. savo paslaiką...

Isokė isirotyti sovenciois

Praba III 21 Eita. Vokietų reikalavimai Lietuvos reikalavimai...

Isokė isirotyti sovenciois

Praba III 21 Eita. Vokietų reikalavimai Lietuvos reikalavimai...

Hitleris šiandien Klaipėdoje

Atplaukia karo laivų „Deutschland“. Su Hitleriu atplaukia admiralas Raederis, gen. Keitelis, gen. Bodenschatzas ir kt. „Deutschlandą“ lydi ištisas karo laivynas

Berlynas III 22 Elta. Ši vakarą iš Swinemünde Hitleris „Deutschland“ šarvuotų išplaukė į Klaipėdą, kur jis įžengs jūros kelio.

Karalaučiuje Hitleris laukiamas ketvirtadienį apie 9 val. ryto, Klaipėdoje — apie vakarą.

Swinemünde III 23 Elta. Pranešama, kad su Hitleriu „Deutschland“ laivų į Klaipėdą atplauks karo laivyno viršininkas admiralas Raederis, generolas Keitelis, generolas Bodenschatzas ir kt.

„Deutschland“ išplauks tuoj po 19 valandos. Jį lydi kreiseris „Leipzig“, šarvuotai „Graf Spee“ ir „Admiral Scheer“, bei to, šarvuotai „Nürnberg“ ir „Köln“, dvi divi-

jos naikintuvų ir trys flotilės torpedinių laivų drauge su viena lydinąja flotile.

Vakar iš „Viktorijos“ viesbučio buvo išrašyti visi viesbučio gyventojai. Kalbama, kad šios viesbučio išsiūlymas susietas su kanclerio Hitlerio numatoma atvykimu į Klaipėdą.

Kovo 22 d. „Viktorijos“ viesbučio restorane pas pletaujančius lietuvius buvo padaryta krata. Iš radiofono vedėjo Gustaitio atimtas revolyeris. Kvietinukas suimtas. Lietuvių suėmimų taip pat esą šioje. Lietuvos Aido korespondentas te-

lefono pranešė, kad dėl Hitlerio atvykimo vietos kompetentinguose vokiečių sluoksniuose tos žiūros nebuvę paneigta. Sekoma, kad Klaipėdoje bus išsodintas vokiečių desantas, tik motorizuotos dalys ateis per Luizės tiltą. Aiškina, kad Klaipėdos kraštas yra pirmoji pajūrio zonis, grįžianti atgal prie Reicho. Tai noris ypatingai pažymėti ir pats fūhreris savo atsilankymu ir karių jėgų jūra atgabenimu.

Vietos vokiečių organizacijos nukėlė svečią ir Reicho fūhrerį ruošiasi labai iškilmingai priimti.

Vakar SA dalinys į Klaipėdą buvo sutrauktas iš viso krašto. Visas miestas skendi Vokietijos vėlavose.

The Government semi-official *Lietuvos aidas*, March 22, 1939 — on Germany's demands to Lithuania.

“Hitler Arrives in Klaipėda Today” — under this headline the newspaper carries ELTA reports on Hitler's sea-voyage to Klaipėda and the preparations made by the Germans to meet him.

No. 6

Telegram of the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Lithuania to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR on Germany's Demands to Lithuania

March 22, 1939

At 0.10 a.m. I was summoned by Lozoraitis and informed of von Ribbentrop's statement made to Urbšys alleging that the attribution of Klaipėda to Germany was an urgent and vital matter to the German population of the Klaipėda region. If Lithuania did not cede Klaipėda amicably, it might cause unrest that could be used as a pretext for an armed interference on the part of the Reich. In case a German were killed during the disturbances, the armed forces of the Reich would move into Lithuania. Major. Ribbentrop suggested that Urbšys should contact Mi-

ronas by phone from Berlin without delay in order to settle the issue. Urbšys promised to reply promptly after his return to Kaunas. Immediately after Urbšys's arrival in Kaunas on March 21, the German Minister called on him and told him that a Lithuanian delegation was expected in Berlin not later than March 22. Lozoraitis announced that the Cabinet had resolved to yield to force and surrender Klaipėda to Germany. The delegation headed by Urbšys leaves for Berlin today. The German Minister as well as those of France, Great Britain and Italy have been informed of the Cabinet's decision.

СССР в борьбе за мир накануне второй мировой войны (сентябрь 1938 г. — август 1939 г.), Документы и материалы, ("USSR in the Struggle for Peace on the Eve of the Second World War" [September 1938-August 1939], Documents and Materials) Moscow, 1971, p. 207.

No. 7

Lithuanian News Agency (ELTA) Dispatch on the Attitude of the British Government Towards Hitler Germany's Aggression Against Lithuania — Annexation of the Klaipėda Territory

March 22, 1939

London, March 22 (Elta). Reuther reports that in his reply to an inquiry made by Mr. Attlee, Mr. Hore, speaking in the House of Commons for Prime Minister Chamberlain, said he had no statement to make on the situation in Central Europe. On the subject of Klaipėda, the Foreign Minister of Lithuania, on a visit in Berlin, was handed in a demand to immediately cede the Klaipėda Territory to the Reich.

The demand was backed with a threat that, in case of resistance or request for help from other countries, the matter would be settled not by diplomatic but military

means. The demand was equivalent to an ultimatum, and the Lithuanian Government had to make a decision during four days' time. Assurances were given that, once the demand was met, no other demands would be made. To his knowledge, Hore said, the demand had been satisfied.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 5.

No. 8

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to All Lithuanian People After the Seizure of the Klaipėda Territory by Nazi Germany

March 23, 1939

CITIZENS OF LITHUANIA!

Nazi Germany has occupied the Klaipėda Territory. It is making preparations to seize the whole of Lithuania for the example of Czechoslovakia shows that Hitler does not content himself with the so-called German regions, but intends to seize whatever he can and whatever he is allowed to seize. In his predatory drive, Hitler defies agreements and his own promises. Therefore, despite the recently signed agreement allegedly recognizing the new borders of the country, Lithuania is faced with day-to-day danger of losing her independence.

While organizing the country's defence today, we are to keep in mind the lesson of Czechoslovakia, showing that a capitulatory policy of endless concessions cannot save the country's independence. The Czechoslovak people was enslaved without resistance. And the responsibility for this does not rest with the Czechoslovak people which was resolute to defend itself, but with the venal reactionary bourgeoisie which has pursued a capitulatory policy and has finally sold out Czechoslovakia.

Citizens! Men and women! We call on all those who stand for the defence of Lithuania's independence to join their efforts against the menace of German occupation. . . .
March 23, 1939

PII PA, f. 1770, 1939, b. 1, l. 27.

No. 9

Extract from the State Security Department Report on the Directions Issued by the Leadership of the Lithuanian Communist Party to Party Members

March 25, 1939

It is known from reliable sources that the leadership of the Lithuanian Communist Party has already instructed Party members on the line of action following the Klaipėda events⁷. The Communists are urged to fight to the best of their abilities the Voldemaras supporters, Activists⁸ and Nazis — the enemies of Lithuania's independence. If Germany attacked Lithuania, all Communists must join the ranks of fighters and in every way possible support the defence action. Moreover, it is reminded that the idea to set up Independence Defence Committees, suggested by the Communists last year and left unrealized, should be renewed.

Such committees should be set up at all workshops and other places of workers' gathering. Besides, it is necessary to explain to the working people that the present Lithuania's entanglement with Germany is a result of the erroneous policy pursued by the Nationalist Government. Instead of a rapprochement with the Soviet Union, the Nationalist Government has long been in favour with the fascist states. Thereupon, the workers are called on to demand the conclusion of a mutual assistance treaty with the Soviet Union.

The Communists should also support those who may take an initiative to form a new democratic government. . . .

In general, the Communists now unanimously oppose Germany and use every opportunity to remind the workers of the menace coming from Germany.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 3.

No. 10

Directives of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to All LCP District Committees on the Political Situation in Lithuania and the Tasks Facing the Communists

April 1, 1939

Comrades! Since the previous letter the situation in the country has changed: a new coalition government has been formed, and the movement for the patriotic front is gathering strength. The new government, to judge it by its composition and the political trends supporting it, seems to be determined to defend the country's independence. Therefore, our Party is ready to support the steps of the government taken to serve the cause of Lithuania's independence. For the same reason our Party will join the patriotic front, of course, without dissolving its own organizations but by further strengthening them. Our present determination is based on the previous course when we were striving for a national defence government enjoying the support of the broad masses. However, the Communist Party, consistently defending Lithuania's independence, brings to light and criticizes the inconsistencies of the government and the patriotic front in defending independence whenever they occur. The exposure of the Voldemaras accomplices, who have joined the patriotic movement, as Lithuania's internal enemies helping Hitler to seize Lithuania, is now of prime importance.

The above attitude of the Party presently dictates a number of practical steps. The Communists should join the Šauliai Association⁹ and invite others to do it; they should urge all those who can carry arms to train to use them; to seek that all the population of the country be armed. In the circumstance, the Communists are determined to support the Arms Fund¹⁰ so that arms should be immediately given out to people, anti-aircraft and anti-gas shelters should be built.

While participating in the independence defence movement, the Communists should always seek support of the broad sections of the nation. We shall fight for liberties for the broad masses and for improvement of their economic position. We shall fight to make the patriotic front free of the fetters of bureaucracy, a truly free movement for independence. . . .

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l 4-5.

No. 11

Report of the State Security Department to the Government on the Patriotic Front in Lithuania

April 3, 1939

The idea of creating such a front has become very popular. It primarily attracts the people belonging to the former so-called opposition. Concrete steps have been taken to this end in some places, while in others permission has been requested to hold inaugural meetings of the patriotic front.

The meetings which have already taken place, for instance, in Žaliakalnis¹¹ and other places, clearly show that the gatherings, instead of calling for consolidation, are used for criticizing the activities of the former government. It is noteworthy that similar sentiments prevailed at the meeting in Žaliakalnis sponsored by the Šauliai Association.

If no appropriate steps are taken and the creation of the patriotic front continues in the same manner as hitherto, we seem to be on the eve of the emergence of the popular front. And we know only too well, by recent examples of other countries, what the popular front may bring about and what order it may establish.

Therefore, the Department deems it necessary to immediately stop the creation of the patriotic front. It maintains that until the Government has made its declaration elaborating the principles of national consolidation, no consolidation coming from the rank and file should be allowed. Real consolidation should come from above. If, however, consolidation begins from the rank and file (the mob), then the rank and file (the mob) will head it.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 6.

No. 12

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to Citizens of Lithuania Calling them to Join All Efforts to Maintain Independence and Eliminate the Menace of Nazi Aggression

April 8, 1939

FIGHT FOR GENUINE NATIONAL UNITY!

The brutal plunderer Hitler is flourishing his blood-stained axe at our country. He has already torn off the Klaipėda Territory and is now threatening the whole of Lithuania. All sorts of anointed and non-anointed 'leaders of the nation' are trying in vain to lull the people's fears. The broad masses are joining on their own the fight for land, for preservation of their language and culture against the crusaders of our times. To achieve true national unity — this is the slogan rallying all Lithuanian citizens who cherish the country's independence.

In the face of direct menace of German occupation, the Lithuanian people, although fettered by the Smetona fas-

cist regime, developed a mass movement which has led to the formation of a new government. However, it is a merely superficial change in the life of the state. The patriotic front, still in the process of formation, has been officially banned by the government at the request of the Nationalist Party, all previously closed organizations have not been officially legalized, political prisoners are still languishing in prisons. And the government itself has plainly declared that the state would follow the landmarks set up by the Smetona regime. This regime, however, means fetters for the people, and a fettered nation is helpless to defend its independence.

Citizens! Men and women! The present situation is too grave for the people to stop half-way. It is no more admissible that the people should be represented by the Nationalist Party alone the leadership of which include persons who sold out Lithuania in 1918¹². The people cannot lay down its arms in the fight for a genuine and consistent national unity which is an essential condition of the country's defence. With this aim in view, our Party calls on to further develop the patriotic front by including all sections of the people who stand for Lithuania's independence, regardless of their political and national differences. We urge the Populists and Catholics to do their utmost and strive more resolutely for the true national unity, without providing cover for the bankrupt Smetona regime. We call on the army circles, who are genuinely determined to fight for independence, to orient themselves towards the national movement and, side by side with all the nation, create the true unity without which the army will not be able to do the duty assigned by the nation. . . .

April 8, 1939

PII PA, f. 1770, 1939, b. 1, l. 28.

No. 13

Extract from the Report of the Agency Office, State Security Department, on the Attitude of the Lithuanian Communist Party Towards the Defence of the Country's Independence and the Creation of the Patriotic Front

April 14, 1939

... More vigorously than before the Communist propaganda exposed the Voldemaras adherents and the Union for Action set up by them in Klaipėda which, they said, with the help of Germany were preparing a putsch in Lithuania, in consequence of which Germany, using the method tested in Czechoslovakia, would occupy her. It was also stressed that the Nationalist Government was putting up too weak resistance to these designs. Hence, the Communist Party and all the workers should unanimously and actively fight for the independence. These propagandist appeals of the Communists had convincing effect on the working class, especially after the loss of the Klaipėda Territory. When the Klaipėda Territory was occupied and a menace to Lithuania's independence arose, the Communist Party, in its propaganda campaign, called on the working people to support the Government's defence action unconditionally. Following the government change and the idea of creating the patriotic front having been put forward, the Communist Party instructed its members to join the patriotic front and call on the working people to participate in it, emphasizing that the patriotic front was an important factor in the action for independence. In addition to that, it was pointed out that Party members and workers who had joined the patriotic front had to wage struggle against the Voldemaras adherents and the Activists and prevent them from assuming leadership of the patriotic front. After the Government's decision to ban the creation of the patriotic front, the Communist Party obliged its members to join the Šauliai Association and call on the workers to join it, stressing that it was done for the sake of defending Lithuania's independence and com-

bating the plots of the Voldemaras clique to sell out Lithuania to Germany. . . .

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 7.

No. 14

Extract from the Letter by Director of the Political Department of the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry, Turauskas, to the Lithuanian Minister to France on Lithuania's Relations with Germany, Poland, Great Britain and France

August 25, 1939

In reply to your letter No. 2345 of July 17 of this year, hereby I inform you that we fully realize that our position, after Britain and France have decided to resolutely fight the German-Italian designs and even go to war, calls for greater flexibility in our relations with Germany and Poland. However, we must be equally flexible in our relations with France and Britain for if, on the one hand, the French are vigilant against us, the Germans, on the other hand, are doing the same more intensively, "reacting" and "recording".

In the circumstance, we are doing our best to regulate our relations in such a way as to evoke possibly less suspicion and reproof from both the sides.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 6.

No. 15

Memorandum of Acting Foreign Minister, Bizauskas, on the Démarche of the German Minister Zechlin

August 29, 1939

I had an appointment with Mr. Zechlin for 11 o'clock at my office in order to exchange notes on neutral trade.

When Mr. Zechlin arrived, however, he declared he was instructed by Mr. von Ribbentrop to make the following official statement:

As stipulated by Article 4 of the treaty concluded between Germany and Lithuania, use of force has been renounced in the mutual relations between the two countries. On behalf of the German Government he wishes to declare that Germany will respect Lithuania's neutrality in case of conflict provided that Lithuania, too, will observe unimpeachable neutrality.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 10.

No. 16

Act of the President of the Republic of Lithuania Concerning the Coming into Force of the Dispositions of the Law Regulating Neutrality

September 1, 1939

Basing myself on Article 3 of the law of January 25, 1939, containing the regulation of neutrality, I proclaim the following:

1. — The Republic of Lithuania remains neutral in the war which has just broken out between the foreign powers.

2. — All those actions which, in conformity with the general rules recognized by the right of nations, carry impairment of this neutrality are prohibited on the territory of the Republic of Lithuania.

3. — In order to safeguard the neutrality of the Republic of Lithuania, the dispositions of the law containing the regulation of neutrality come into effect from September 1, 1939, in regard to all the belligerent powers.

Vyriausybės žinios, September 1, 1939, No. 660.

No. 17

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to Lithuanian Citizens in Connection with Fascist Germany's Attack upon Poland

September 3, 1939

... Comrades, citizens! So far our country is not involved in the war. However, we are daily threatened with military attack. The belligerent Germany and Poland may attempt to use the Lithuanian territory; Germany may force Lithuania to set out against Poland; Lithuania may be used as a compensation to Poland for Danzig and the Corridor. Therefore, it is insufficient to declare neutrality, still more fatal it would be to believe Germany's and Poland's assurances to respect Lithuania's neutrality. The main task today is to do our best to prepare for the defence of Lithuania's independence, to which the Communists call all the citizens of Lithuania.

The main guarantee of our country's staunchness lies in the true national unity which was nipped in the bud by the Smetona-Černius Government¹³....

Comrades, citizens! In our immediate struggle for the defence of Lithuania, for successful realization of the defence tasks, we must incessantly strive for the establishment of a government capable of ensuring the defence of our country.

PII PA, f. 1770, 1939, b. 1, l. 33.

No. 18

Telegram of the Lithuanian Minister in Great Britain to the Lithuanian Government on Britain's Attitude Towards the German Proposal to Lithuania to Enter War Against Poland

September 11, 1939

It has been repeatedly rumoured here that Lithuania is maturing an idea to avail of the opportunity for regain-

ing Vilnius. When asked, Preston ¹⁴ is said to have replied that for the time being it was not true, yet it might be possible in future. Collier ¹⁵ declared informally, in the form of a *démarche*: the British are determined to fight to victory, no matter how long it might take. If we yielded to such a temptation, the position of Lithuania at the peace conference would be extremely difficult.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 12, l. 12.

No. 19

Extract from the Bulletin of the State Security Department on the Instructions and Comments Issued by the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to Commu- nist Party Members

September 11, 1939

It has become known from reliable sources that certain members of the Communist Party leadership recently received, through a member of the Central Committee Secretariat, appropriate comments and instructions to the effect that the Non-Aggression Pact between the Soviet Union and Germany had brought about the following undeniable achievements:

1. The anti-Comintern coalition of fascist states, aggressively aspiring to eradicate communism, has been fundamentally destroyed.

2. The intestine unity of the fascist states has been disrupted: Japan is separated from Germany, distrust and coolness are felt in Germany's relations with Italy, Hungary and Spain; thus all the enemies of the Soviet Union and communism have been weakened.

3. The security of the Baltic States has been ensured from the German aggression for the Germans, when signing the Pact, had pledged themselves to abstain from attacking these countries.

Lithuania must preserve neutrality to the belligerents. If Germany forced Lithuania to fight with her against

Poland under the pretext of regaining Vilnius (which was possible) and if the Lithuanian Government decided to put an armed resistance to such coercion, all Communist Party members must unconditionally support the resistance action and take up arms to defend Lithuania's independence.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 9.

No. 20

Extract from Directive No. 4 of the German Supreme Command of September 25, 1939, Signed by Hitler, on Germany's Attitude Towards Lithuania

...A decision on further military operations will be made in the nearest future.

Until then, the measures undertaken to rearm and reorganize different combat arms should not prevent us from making new eventual decisions. In East Prussia it is necessary to keep forces strong enough to occupy Lithuania at any time, even in case of armed resistance.

W. Hubatsch, *Hitlers Weisungen für die Kriegführung. 1939-1945*. Dokumente des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht, pp. 26-27.

No. 21

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to the Progressive Public Calling to Rally Against the Menace of Hitler's Protectorate

September 26, 1939

AWAY WITH HITLER'S PROTECTORATE!

...Workers, peasants, working intelligentsia and all the people of good will! Lithuania is in danger! Our nation is threatened with Hitler's yoke and destruction! Eve-

rywhere, in towns and villages, at enterprises and estates let defence committees be set up to defend Lithuania from Nazi Germany and Lithuanian traitors. Call demonstrations and rally all the people. In her struggle for independence, Lithuania should rely but on the Soviet Union — the defender and liberator of small nations. Resist labour conscription and other steps directed against the Lithuanian people and the Soviet Union! Fight for a government able to ensure Lithuania's defence and freedom. And if, despite the nation's voice, Hitler's protectorate were proclaimed, we call upon everybody to rise and defend Lithuania with all might. In neighbourhood with the USSR, our people will unanimously defend the country from the invaders and our own traitors!

Away with Hitler's protectorate!

Long live the Soviet Union — the defender and liberator of small nations!

Down with the fascist government of Smetona and Černius!

Long live free Lithuania!

PII PA, f. 1770, 1939, b. 1, l. 35.

Nr. 22

Memorandum of Lithuanian Minister to the USSR, Natkevičius, on his Meeting with Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Molotov

September 29, 1939

After our meeting of September 19, in view of new developments, I asked again for a meeting with Molotov or his assistant in order to get a clearer idea of the Soviet Union's intentions towards Lithuania. As the recent events and the occupation by the Red Army of the districts which according to the Treaty of July 12, 1920, were attributed to Lithuania ¹⁶, excited the public opinion, I wished to raise

the question of a declaration to be made on the attitude of the Soviet Union towards the Lithuanian Republic (in terms of the instruction of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs). However, the talks of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars with the Turkish, German, and Estonian Foreign Ministers prevented a prompt meeting.

On September 29 I received an invitation to arrive at the Kremlin at nine o'clock in the afternoon. Usually, when an envoy is summoned to the Kremlin, an important meeting is to be expected. I was prepared for certain declarations on Mr. Molotov's part and even made arrangements for my eventual flight to Kaunas.

At the talk Mr. Molotov was assisted by Mr. Potemkin¹⁷. Mr. Molotov was the first to speak. He stated that Lithuania's friendly attitude to the Soviet Union was known to them and that they highly appreciated it. Time had come, however, to make that friendliness more concrete. It was no secret that Germany wanted to win Lithuania over to her side. It was important, therefore, for the USSR to know which side Lithuania was favouring. Now it was insufficient "to be lukewarm, it was time to make a choice". He said he did not press me for an answer immediately, but he wished a member of the Government (Prime Minister, for instance) to come to Moscow and elucidate this point....

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 6.

No. 23

Memorandum of Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Urbšys, on the Expected Talks Between Lithuania and the USSR

September 29, 1939

The Lithuanian Minister in Moscow Natkevičius was received by Molotov who, after stating his views on the relations between Lithuania and the USSR, expressed a

wish that the Prime Minister or the Minister of Foreign Affairs would come to Moscow to elucidate some points concerning those relations. With this end in view, Mr. Natkevičius arrived in Kaunas on September 30. On the same day, the President of the Republic called a meeting of the Government at which Mr. Natkevičius gave an account of his talks with Molotov. On October 1, the President of the Republic held another meeting attended by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Defence Minister, the Commander of the Army, the Chief of the General Staff, the Director of the Political Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Minister in Moscow.

It was agreed that the Minister of Foreign Affairs should go to Moscow. On the advice of the latter, theses on Lithuania's relations with the Soviet Union were approved. They were to serve as an instruction for the Minister of Foreign Affairs in his talks with the Government of the Soviet Union. Here are the theses:

1. Good, friendly relations with the Soviet Union have been a constant trend of Lithuania's foreign policy, the main landmarks of which were the Peace Treaty of 1920 and the Non-Agression Treaty of 1926¹⁸. Article 1 of the latter joins both the agreements into one organic unit. The Government of Lithuania is firmly determined to make every effort on its part to secure the continuity of this political line in future.

2. The Government of Lithuania is firmly determined, in the future as well as in the past, under no circumstances to give direct or indirect support to any action directed against the whole of the Soviet Union or its part or against the international interests of the USSR.

3. The neutral trend of Lithuania's foreign policy was emphasized in the Peace Treaty as well as in the notes the sides exchanged in 1926, when signing the Non-Aggression Treaty. This neutral line was confirmed both by Lithuania's actual behaviour after the outbreak of war between Poland and Germany and in the note handed by Molotov to the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow on

He leg aey a Sui lo Sore
ty Sa j ung ai Savi lo pi
ni pagal bo pa ta
neu ha lu mo E dose.

Jegu Sore ty Sa j ung
O f r a u s y b e si pa u ly-
ma at me sty, Li de leg a-
cy a pa ci lu Sui lo -

1) Savi lo pi ni pa-
gal bo pa ta be kon-
ho li,

2) Savi lo pi ni pa-
gal bo pa ta su kon-
ho li,

3) Savi lo pi ni
pagal bo pa ta su
a vi a eni ba li a u
g k e e lat a p r i b o t o o c
b r e t o o c (a v i a c y o s u
s a r v a n a s b a r i s - 2 p u l-
k a i).

Štai įsakyti mums re
kia tik, tai

delegacija bus admi
nistracinė. Ji viską bus
susitvarkys.

Pasėdės pradės 17
valandą, bus tas -
13, 5 valandų

Reaguoti bus preki-
dams

skirs tas pirmą

valandą
bus tas

Extract from the instructions approved by the Lithuanian Council of Ministers on October 1, 1939, for the negotiations to be held in Moscow on the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty.

September 17¹⁹. The Government of Lithuania is going to adhere to this policy of neutrality in future as well.

4. Lithuania is ready to defend her neutrality with arms in hand in future as heretofore. If in future any state attempted to attack the Soviet Union through Lithuania, the latter would offer armed resistance. If Lithuania's neutrality were threatened, Lithuania might appeal to the Soviet Union for aid, specifying its character and degree.

5. Lithuania's policy of neutrality and the sense of self-defence makes Lithuania maintain the relations of good neighbourhood with her other neighbours too. First of all, this refers to our relations with Germany, particularly taking into consideration that she has granted us a free zone in the port of Klaipėda and that the Nemunas is the waterway linking Lithuania with the sea, as well as the fact that Germany occupies an important place in Lithuania's foreign trade and Lithuania is keenly interested in maintaining this trade with Germany.

6. Within the limits of these principles the Government of Lithuania is prepared to negotiate with the Soviet Union the measures to be taken by both sides to consolidate good, rightful and friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

7. As to territorial issues, the border-line established by the Peace Treaty should be regarded as valid; it can be said, however, that the Lithuanian Government agrees to renegotiate that line in accordance with the line marked on the map handed to the delegation.

At four o'clock on October 1, I summoned Pozdniakov²⁰ and told him about the Government's decision to send me to Moscow. I asked him to inform his government about it and inquire when my arrival would be convenient. I also proposed to publish on the day of my departure the following communique: "At the invitation of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the Commissar for Foreign Affairs Mr. Molotov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania Mr. Urbšys leaves Kaunas for Moscow today. The aim of the visit is to discuss issues concerning Lithuania and the USSR." Pozdniakov agreed to communicate everything to Moscow....

When I saw Zechlin on October 2, I told him of my visit to Moscow at the invitation of Molotov. Mr. Zechlin was not surprised, he only added that personally he would rather see me flying in the opposite direction. He repeated it twice....

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 7-9.

No. 24

Treaty Between Lithuania and the USSR on the Transfer of Vilnius and the Region of Vilnius and Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance

October 10, 1939

The President of the Lithuanian Republic on the one side, and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the other side,

For the purpose of developing the friendly relations established by the Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, based on the recognition of independent State existence and of non-intervention in the internal affairs of the other party;

Recognizing that the Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, and the Pact on Non-Aggression and the Peaceful Settlement of Conflicts of September 28, 1926, continue to provide a firm basis for their mutual relations and undertakings;

Convinced that it is in the interests of both contracting parties to define the exact conditions of ensuring mutual security and to make a just settlement of the question to which State the city of Vilnius and the Vilnius region (unlawfully wrested from Lithuania by Poland) belong;

Have found it necessary to conclude the following treaty on the transfer of the city of Vilnius and the Vilnius region to the Lithuanian Republic and on mutual assistance between Lithuania and the Soviet Union, and have appointed for this purpose as their plenipotentiaries;

The President of the Lithuanian Republic: Juozas Urbšys, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: V. M. Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs; who, having presented their credentials, which were found to be drawn up in due form and proper order, agreed on the following:

Article I

For the purpose of consolidating the friendship between Lithuania and the USSR, the city of Vilnius and the Vilnius region are transferred by the Soviet Union to the Lithuanian Republic and included in the territory of the Lithuanian State, the frontier between the Lithuanian Republic and the USSR being established in accordance with the map appended hereto, which frontier shall be specified in more detail in a supplementary protocol.

Article II

The Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Union undertake to render each other every assistance, including military assistance, should Lithuania be attacked or in danger of attack, or should the Soviet Union be attacked or in danger of attack through Lithuanian territory by any European Power.

Article III

The Soviet Union undertakes to render the Lithuanian army assistance in armaments and other military equipment on favourable terms.

Article IV

The Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Union undertake jointly to protect the State frontiers of Lithuania, for which purpose the Soviet Union is granted the right to maintain at its own expense, at points in the Lithuanian Republic to be established by mutual agreement, Soviet

land and air armed forces of strictly limited strength. The exact locations of these troops and the boundaries within which they may be quartered, their strength at each particular point, and also all other questions of an economic, administrative, or jurisdictional character, and other questions arising in connection with the presence of Soviet armed forces on Lithuanian territory under the present treaty, shall be regulated by special agreements.

The sites and buildings necessary for this purpose shall be allotted by the Lithuanian Government on lease at a reasonable price.

Article V

In the event of the danger of an attack on Lithuania or on the USSR through Lithuanian territory, the two contracting parties shall immediately discuss the resulting situation and take all measures found necessary by mutual agreement to secure the inviolability of the territories of the contracting parties.

Article VI

The two contracting parties undertake not to conclude any alliance or to participate in any coalition directed against either of the contracting parties.

Article VII

The coming into force of the present treaty shall not affect in any way the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their State organization, economic and social system, military measures, and the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs generally.

The locations of the Soviet land and air armed forces (article IV of the present treaty) remain in all circumstances a component part of the territory of the Lithuanian Republic.

Article VIII

The provisions of the present treaty concerned with undertakings for mutual assistance between the Lithuanian Republic and the USSR (articles II to VII) shall remain in force for fifteen years, and, unless one of the contracting parties finds it necessary to denounce the provisions of this treaty established for a specified term one year prior to the expiration of that term, they shall automatically continue in force for the next ten years.

Article IX

The present treaty comes into force upon exchange of instruments of ratification. Exchange of these instruments shall take place in Kaunas within six days from the day of signature of this treaty.

The present treaty is made in two originals, in the Lithuanian and Russian languages, in Moscow, October 10, 1939.

J. Urbšys

V. Molotov

Vyriausybės žinios, October 17, 1939, No. 669.

No. 25

Extract from the Speech of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Urbšys, at the Seimas Session while Discussing the Transfer of Vilnius and the Vilnius Region to Lithuania and the Ratification of the Mutual Assistance Treaty Between Lithuania and the Soviet Union

October 14, 1939

Mr. President, esteemed members of the Seimas! On October 10, a treaty was signed between Lithuania and the Soviet Union in Moscow providing the transfer of Vilnius and the region of Vilnius to the Lithuanian Republic and containing clauses on mutual assistance between the two states. On behalf of the Government, I have

the honour to submit this treaty to the Seimas for approval....

The signing of the treaty on October 10 in Moscow, which is presented for ratification, means that Lithuania's relations with the Soviet Union enter a new phase as this treaty provides for the return of Vilnius and the region of Vilnius to Lithuania and also for mutual assistance between the two countries. This assistance, as stipulated by Article 2 of the treaty, is to be of all kinds, including military assistance, should Lithuania be attacked or threatened with attack, or should the Soviet Union be attacked or threatened with attack through Lithuanian territory by any European state. Thus in case of eventual armed conflicts between the Soviet Union and other states, Lithuania would be automatically involved only if Lithuania herself were attacked or if the Soviet Union were attacked through Lithuanian territory. In all other cases Lithuania, maintaining, naturally, close contacts with the Soviet Union, will be able to retain her neutrality.

Article 4 is of particular importance. It states that the Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Union undertake jointly to protect the state frontiers of Lithuania, for which purpose the Soviet Union is granted the right to maintain at its own expense, at points in the Lithuanian Republic to be established by mutual agreement, Soviet land and air armed forces of strictly limited strength. It stands to reason that the presence of alien troops on the territory of another state gives rise to a number of practical and principal problems and difficulties. Therefore, the Lithuanian delegation at first adhered to the opinion that the mutual assistance treaty between Lithuania and the Soviet Union could be fully effective without the Soviet army units being stationed on Lithuanian territory. The Soviet Union, however, maintained that at such troublous time when the Great Powers of Europe were at war, when there was no certainty about tomorrow and it was impossible to foresee when, where, whose and what forces might attack the Soviet Union through Lithuania or Lithuania herself, the Soviet Union had to make definite military

preparations and to station army units at certain points of strategic importance. These arguments of the Soviet Government had to be accepted by the Government of Lithuania and the latter had to agree that at certain points which are to be established by agreement a strictly limited number of Soviet land and air armed forces be stationed. . . .

Seimas Verbatim Report, 7th Ordinary Session, 146th Sitting, 1939, pp. 76-77.

No. 26

*Tiesa*²¹, October 15, 1939 — Extract from the Editorial "The Mutual Assistance Treaty is a Reality"

Having concluded the Non-Aggression Treaty with Germany, the Soviet Union saved the major part of East Europe from the horrors of imperialist war. The Red Army liberated West Byelorussia and the West Ukraine from the Polish rule and from the threat of Hitler's yoke. By concluding mutual assistance treaties with the Baltic States, the Soviet Union prevented Hitler Germany and other imperialist states from encroaching upon their territories. All these steps not only have added to the power and security of the Soviet Union, but also have shown it as a consistent fighter for peace, for the protection and liberation of small nations. . . .

The international position of the Lithuanian bourgeoisie has been considerably weakened. The Polish gendarme is no longer at its side. The other gendarme — Hitler Germany — is presently not in a position to interfere into Lithuania's internal affairs either. In general, the treaty concluded by the Soviet Union prevents any interference of third states into internal affairs of Lithuania. Thus the Lithuanian bourgeoisie is left alone. And we are aware that the Lithuanian people, organized and united, is much stronger than the forces of the bourgeoisie which finds support today only in the reactionary military circles. So

the situation holds promise for the Lithuanian people in its struggle for liberation from fascism and the yoke of exploitation....

Tiesa, October 15, 1939.

No. 27

Lithuanian News Agency Dispatch on the March of the Lithuanian Troops to Vilnius

October 27, 1939

Kaunas, October 26, Elta. At 9 a.m. October 27, the Lithuanian Army units begin their march to Vilnius. The eternal capital of Lithuania — Vilnius — will be reached on October 28. The units of the Lithuanian Army taking part in the march are named the Vilnius Brigade. It is under the command of Div Gen Vincas Vitkauskas.

Lietuvos aidas, October 27, 1939.

No. 28

Minutes of the Meeting of the Government Commission of the Lithuanian Republic and the Military Mission of the USSR Held on October 28 to Discuss the Issues Related to the Establishment of Soviet Garrisons in Lithuania

October 28, 1939

1. Present: 1. Div Gen Rėklaitis,
2. Brig Gen Karvelis,
3. Brig Gen Gustaitis,
4. Col Rupšys,
5. Div Cmdr Alexeyev,
6. Div Cmdr Korobkov,
7. Brigade Commissar Nikolayev,
and other members.

2. Agenda: 1. Detailed discussion of the draft put forward by the Lithuanian Commission
2. After a long discussion the draft was finally worded by mutual agreement and without alteration submitted to the plenary session for discussion.
3. The economic questions were not discussed as the Soviet Military Mission lacked adequate powers.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 3.

No. 29

Final Protocol of the Meeting Between the Government Commission of the Lithuanian Republic and the Military Mission of the USSR to Discuss the Establishment of Soviet Garrisons in Lithuania

October 28, 1939

The Lithuanian delegation suggested to sign the agreement at once as it had already been verified by the Lithuanian Commission.

The head of the Soviet Military Mission suggested to have the text read as it could be understood by everybody. The readings is motivated by the solemnity of the moment.

The proposal is accepted.

Div Cmdr Alexeyev reads the Russian text of the agreement. The text was read at 22.50.

Then the documents of the agreement were signed by the delegations. (The original copy is presented to the Council of Ministers.)

At 23.10 Rėklaitis²² made a speech in which he thanked the Soviet Military Mission and its head in particular for the friendly working atmosphere.

At 23.13 the head of the Soviet Military Mission in his turn expressed his satisfaction that the preparatory

work had gone smoothly and said he hoped that the agreement would serve to strengthen the friendship between the two states.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 4.

No. 30

Speech of Div Gen Rėklaitis, Representative of the Lithuanian Government, in the Kaunas Officers' Club at Signing the Agreement Between Lithuania and the USSR on the Establishment of Soviet Garrisons in Lithuania

October 28, 1939

On behalf of the Lithuanian delegation, I express sincere gratitude to the Soviet Military Mission for friendliness and the atmosphere of mutual confidence so desirable and necessary in discussing such important and complicated issues.

I am particularly thankful to the Commander of the Army, head of the Soviet delegation. Thanks to your tact and your positive attitude to the talks, we were able in a short time to accomplish our work the results of which afford us mutual satisfaction.

Allow me, Mr. Commander of the Army, to express hope that the agreement reached will serve to promote closer ties between our armies and will strengthen the security of our borders.

I'm pleased to note that the signing of our agreement coincides with a historic event — the entry of our troops into the ancient capital Vilnius. Undoubtedly, this coincidence is a guarantee of the further development of our traditional relationship.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 5.

No. 31

Decision of the Council of Ministers of Lithuania on the Establishment of the Soviet Garrisons on Lithuanian Territory

October 30, 1939

On October 30, 1939, the Council of Ministers, after hearing the report by the head of the commission Div Gen Rėklaitis on the agreement signed with the representatives of the Soviet Army on the establishment of the Soviet garrisons on the territory of Lithuania, decided:

1. To approve the agreement between the representatives of the Red Army of Workers and Peasants of the USSR and the representatives of the Government of Lithuania on the establishment of the Soviet garrisons on the territory of Lithuania including the additional protocol.

2. The Defence Minister is charged with the implementation of the agreement mentioned in paragraph 1. In case of necessity, the Defence Minister is entitled to establish, in cooperation with other ministers concerned, interdepartmental commissions to discuss the issues.

Enclosure: copies of the agreement in the Lithuanian and Russian languages.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 14, l. 9.

No. 32

Plan of the Meeting Ceremony to Mark the Entry of the Soviet Army Units into Lithuania, Approved by Minister of Defence Musteikis

November 11, 1939

The Soviet troops shall enter the territory of the Lithuanian Republic on November 15, 1939.

In the environs of Liudvinavas a ceremony shall be held on November 15, 1939, to mark the entry of the Soviet troops into the territory of Lithuania.

For this purpose, one rifle company with an orchestra and a four cannon battery shall be assigned by both the Lithuanian and the Soviet armies for the salute.

The companies shall be drawn up on both sides of the road. The distance between them shall be 100 m. The orchestra shall stand in the right wing. For the salute the batteries shall take firing position. After the Commander of the Soviet Army units reports himself and after the exchange of salutes on both sides, the Salute of Nations — 21 salvos from each battery — shall be fired. Then the march of the troops shall begin.

The barracks that the Soviet troops abandon in Vilnius shall be turned over to the Lithuanian Army. This shall be performed by the Soviet officers assigned for the task.

Annexes:

1. Overlay of the troop formation at the time of the ceremony to mark the entry of the Soviet troops into the territory of the Lithuanian Republic.

2. Plan and programme of the ceremony.

Kaunas, November 11, 1939.

Division General Rėklaitis,
Chairman of the Commission for
the Establishment of the Soviet
Garrison

Brigade Commander Semenov,
Chief of Staff of the Soviet Gar-
rison in Lithuania

Approved: Minister of Defence K. Musteikis,
November 10, 1939

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 8.

**Extract from the Draft Regulations Covering the Relations
of the Soviet Army Units with the Lithuanian Army, Civil
Administration and the Population**

November, 1939

... Relations with the civil administration and the population:

1. The Lithuanian local administration, while entering into relations with the Soviet troops within the camps, shall abide by the rules of correctness proper to the army of a friendly country. The Soviet troops and their command shall respect and fulfil all the lawful requirements of the Lithuanian local administration.

2. The officials of the Lithuanian army and the civil administration are entitled to check the permits of the Soviet servicemen. The Soviet servicemen, found beyond the borders of the camp without specified permits, shall be detained by the Lithuanian military or civil authorities and returned to the command of the Soviet camp.

3. The Soviet servicemen shall not interfere and shall not prevent the local administration from fulfilling its duties and abstain from any kind of discussions pertaining to the local laws, orders and rules, shall not participate in the meetings, parties and gatherings of any kind, and in the life of the local population in general.

4. Civilians shall be admitted to the sites of the Soviet camps only to perform their duty.

5. Outside the camps the Soviet soldiers shall behave in accordance with the laws and rules of public order valid in Lithuania.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 9.

Secret Instructions Sent by the Vilnius Commandant to the Chief of the City and District of Vilnius on the Collection of Information about the Soviet Troops

November 18, 1939

I request you to order the chiefs of the police stations to collect information about the Soviet troops stationed on the territory of Lithuania according to the present extract from the instructions issued by the 2nd Staff Section of the Vilnius Brigade ²³:

On the Soviet Troops

Movement of the Soviet troops, composition of the units noticed and direction of the movement (whence, whereto), when and where noticed.

Armament: to establish the exact number and type of artillery, cannon, armoured cars, lorries.

Armed service, unit: battalion, regiment, division, corps.

The morale of the Soviet servicemen, their mutual relations. Measures to maintain discipline.

The attitude of the Soviet servicemen, officers in particular, to the role of commissars.

The attitude of the Soviet servicemen to the state system in their country.

Provisions and clothing.

Trespassing the established borders. Time and place of trespassing, rank and number of trespassers, their armament, aim of trespassing.

Air flights: whence and whereto, type of aircraft, number, height.

On the Local Population

Sentiments of the population and their sympathies for Lithuania and Russia.

Talking points of the Polish population, their attitude to our troops. Their secret organizations and the tasks assigned to them.

Availability of arms and ammunition among the local population; if any, their whereabouts.

Manifestations of the local population and their aims. Nationality, age and approximate number of those participating in manifestations.

Economic situation: the effects of currency change, food supplies, excess manpower.

General Directions

Each report shall provide answers to the following points: 1. when (to within a minute), 2. where (the exact place), 3. what (indicate the armed service), 4. how many (unit, number of arms or people), 5. action (standing, moving, whence, whereto).

The reports shall avoid vague expressions.

The forces once noticed shall be kept in view. The watch shall be continuous and every change in the composition or movement shall be noted.

Always mark the beginning, course and the end of the event and its consequences. State the reliability and the source of information (without mentioning names).

Reports on the deployment of units, emplacements and fortifications shall be sent in slides with extensive remarks.

Information shall be sent daily from 7.00 to 8.00 and from 17.00 to 18.00. Important changes in the situation, such as withdrawal of Soviet troops or arrival of new units in the border-area, especially mobile ones, shall be reported without any delay.

The information shall be collected by means available in the circumstances.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 12.

No. 35

Secret Instructions Sent by Director of the Police Department, Svilas, to the Chiefs of the Alytus, Kaunas, Marijampolė and Vilnius Districts on Intelligence Collection about the Soviet Garrisons

December 4, 1939

Besides the information about the movement of Soviet motor vehicles and other means across the former administration line, by order of the Minister, I request to observe and report everything in the life of the Soviet garrisons that bears on our interests.

All the events shall be reported promptly, the reports shall be clear and definite, indicating where, when, and what happened. In case witnesses of the event — our citizens — are known, they should be questioned by the police, in order to find out the names of the Soviet servicemen and the exact circumstances of the event.

In general, the information about the Soviet garrisons shall be prompt and definite²⁴.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 17.

No. 36

Extract from the Report of the State Security Department on the Activity of British and French Agents in Lithuania

December 30, 1939

It has been known to our State Security organs that certain Polish refugees, civilians and servicemen, are involved in espionage and, having settled in various parts of Lithuania, are trying to continue their activities collecting information about German and Soviet military activity for the benefit of the Allies....

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 16, l. 19.

Extract from the Report Sent by Lithuanian Minister to the USSR, Natkevičius, to Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Urbšys, on the Statement of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Molotov, on the Provocative Actions against Soviet Servicemen in Lithuania

May 25, 1940

At 9 p.m. on May 25, . . . Kozyrev, Mr. Molotov's secretary, telephoned me to inquire if I could arrive at the Kremlin to see the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars that very night. . . .

Molotov received me sullenly. Offering me a seat, he said he had something important to tell me. To make it clearer, he said, he would read a statement.

He read the following:

"According to Minister Pozdniakov's report, new cases of disappearance of Soviet servicemen from their military units — namely of the soldiers Nosov and Shmavgonets — have taken place recently. To our knowledge the disappearance of these servicemen has been arranged by certain persons under the protection of the Lithuanian authorities, who intoxicated the Red Army men, induced them to commit crimes, and after that prepared their desertion or murder. The Soviet Government considers such conduct of the Lithuanian authorities a provocation of the Soviet Union fraught with grave consequences. The Soviet Government proposes to the Lithuanian Government to stop such provocative actions undertaken by the agents known to the Lithuanian authorities and to take measures to find the missing Soviet servicemen and to deliver them to the headquarters of the Soviet bases in Lithuania without delay.

The Soviet Government hopes that the Lithuanian Government will take steps to accept these proposals and will not force it to take other measures.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 16.

Communique of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR on Provocations by the Lithuanian Government against the Soviet Union

May 30, 1940

The TASS news agency sent the following telegram late yesterday, May 29: "The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union issues the following communique:

Recently there have been many disappearances of soldiers from Soviet military bases located on Lithuanian territory under the Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty of Mutual Assistance. From information gathered by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, it appears that these "disappearances" have been arranged by certain persons under the auspices of the Lithuanian authorities. In one case, for instance, Shmavgonets, a tank driver of a tank brigade, disappeared from his military unit on May 18 and came back on May 26. Shmavgonets reported to the command that on May 18 he was kidnapped and transported to an unknown house where he was held in the basement for 7 days. For several days Shmavgonets did not get anything to eat or drink. The kidnappers, using violence and threats, tried to obtain information on the tank brigade and its armament. On the night of May 25 Shmavgonets was blindfolded, taken out of the town and released.

Pisarev, a tank driver of the same tank brigade, disappeared on May 24 and came back on May 27. Pisarev disclosed that on the evening of May 24 when he was in the truck park of the brigade (the park is situated in the yard of a military station of a Lithuanian infantry regiment) he was attacked by 6 persons. The attackers gagged him, put a bag over his head, led him away in an unknown direction to a basement, where he spent 3 days without water and food. The kidnappers, using violence, interrogated Pisarev on the situation of the brigade, especially

where it was to be transferred. Pisarev succeeded in escaping through a sewer main. The outward appearance of both Red Army men, Pisarev and Shmavgonets, was marked particularly by fatigue and exhaustion attesting to the harsh treatment which they had undergone. Furthermore, there was the case of serviceman Butayev, who disappeared from his military unit in February of this year. The Lithuanian authorities in Vilnius, who were requested by the Red Army command to search for Butayev, informed the Red Army authorities that Butayev had committed suicide on May 1 when they attempted to arrest him. In this case the Lithuanian authorities explained that death occurred from a bullet in the mouth, but an examination of the corpse established that the wound was in the area of the heart ²⁵. There were other contradictions in the information given by the officials of Lithuania. There were two more cases involving the disappearance of Soviet soldiers in Lithuania.

On May 25 of this year the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Mr. V. M. Molotov, stated in the name of the Soviet Government through the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow, Mr. Natkevičius, that the Soviet Government considered that the attitude of the Lithuanian authorities toward the USSR was provocative and would involve grave consequences. The Soviet Government demanded that the Lithuanian Government take the necessary steps to halt immediately these provocative actions and to search for the Soviet soldiers who had disappeared. The Soviet Government expressed its hope that the Lithuanian Government would accept the Soviet proposals and would not force it to take other measures".

Rytinis Lietuvos aidas, May 30, 1940.

Izvestiya, May 30, 1940.

Report of the Lithuanian Minister to the Soviet Union, Natkevičius, Sent from Moscow to Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Urbšys, on his Meeting with Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Molotov

June 3, 1940

At 9.10 p.m. on June 3 the head of Mr. Molotov's bureau Kozyrev telephoned me to inquire if I could arrive at 9.30 p.m. in the Kremlin to see the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. I told him I was leaving in ten minutes' time.

The atmosphere of the reception was much more affable than that of May 25. As I had got your telegrams Nos. 303 and 305 in time, I inquired the Chairman if I might make a short statement on the incidents. With Molotov's permission, I read the following:

"On behalf of the Lithuanian Government, I express my gratitude to the Government of the Soviet Union for this friendly indication of the circumstances which, notwithstanding the best intentions on the part of the Lithuanian Government, might harm the mutual confidence, the friendly relations that have been tested in the course of 20 years, and the Soviet Army units stationed in Lithuania.

The Government of Lithuania has taken the following measures to ensure the security of the Soviet units in Lithuania:

- Many suspects have been arrested.
- The location areas of the Soviet army units have been cleared of suspected elements.
- From June 1 special police stations have been established in these areas to control the population.
- Women of doubtful character have been sent away.
- Public houses have been put under strict control, some of them closed.

The Lithuanian Government will be obliged to the Soviet Government for the expression of its wishes on the issue under consideration.

For investigation of particular incidents, the Government of Lithuania has appointed a special commission of inquiry which functions according to the directions of the Prime Minister and is directly supervised by the Minister of Justice.

As for Butayev's case, the circumstances of his concealment or death have been investigated. Those guilty of participation and neglect shall be punished.

In the case of the Red Army men Pisarev and Shmavgonets, certain assistance on the part of the command of the Soviet garrisons would be desirable, namely, an interrogation of the offenders. In this case, too, those guilty of the participation and suspected of neglect shall be severely punished."

I left the statement which was written in Russian and undated.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 18-19.

No. 40

ELTA Dispatch on the Work of the Commission Investigating the Facts of the Anti-Soviet Provocations Referred to in the Note of the Soviet Government of May 29, 1940

June 4, 1940

The commission appointed by the Government of Lithuania to investigate the facts mentioned in the note of the Soviet Government to the Lithuanian Government, referring to the incidents with certain Soviet servicemen in Lithuania, has been tackling the job in Vilnius. Chairman of the Commission, Prosecutor Brazinskas, arrived in Kaunas on June 3, 1940, to inform the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice of the course and the conditions of the commission's work. After making his report, Prosecutor

Brazinskas immediately went back to head the commission. According to his words, the work will take quite a long time as many people are to be interrogated.

The Government of Lithuania has instructed its bodies to strengthen the police control in the location areas of the Soviet garrisons in Lithuania. Respective bodies are imposed the task of focusing their attention on the suspects who have settled in given areas or visit them.

Rytinis Lietuvos aidas, June 4, 1940.

No. 41

Lietuvos aidas, June 6, 1940 — Extract from the Editorial Published in Connection with the Visit of Prime Minister Merkys to Moscow to Discuss the Implementation of the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty

As it is already known, on May 25 of this year, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR Molotov made a statement through our Minister in Moscow to the Lithuanian Government on behalf of the Soviet Government in which, referring to the cases of disappearance of some servicemen belonging to the Soviet garrisons stationed on the territory of Lithuania, he warned the Lithuanian Government to put an end to such actions. The Lithuanian Government reacted without delay, offered the Soviet Government the explanations required and promised to give them additionally. At the same time, a special commission was appointed to carry out a thorough investigation of the cases mentioned and to find the offenders who the Government pledged itself to punish severely. As it is known the commission, working under the direct supervision of the Minister of Justice, began tackling its task without delay²⁶. In addition, the Lithuanian Government has instructed respective bodies to enforce measures strengthening the police control in the areas around the Soviet garrisons in Lithuania....

Besides, it should be noted that the Lithuanian Government, expressing its readiness to give additional explanation on the issues in question, thought it expedient to send one of its members to discuss the matter directly. Consequently, Prime Minister Merkys received an invitation from Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR Molotov to arrive in Moscow.

Lietuvos aidas, June 6, 1940.

No. 42

Extract from the Telegram of Lithuanian Prime Minister, Merkys, Sent to Kaunas Regarding his Talk with Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Molotov, of June 9, 1940

On June 9, Molotov accused Lithuania of entering a military alliance with Latvia and Estonia, disregarding the Soviet Union. He pointed out the following motives: my article in the *Revue Baltique*²⁷, which declared that all the obstacles on the way to a full cooperation of the Baltic States had been obviated; the statement made by Turauskas²⁸ to Pozdniakov on April 3 on the military alliance; the visits of the Chiefs of Staffs and Generals Gerulaitis and Rėklaitis²⁹; frequent conferences of the Baltic States³⁰; the appointment of our military attaché to Estonia. My assurances were found to be inadequate. I was asked to inform the Government and to submit more exhaustive explanations. The situation is serious. Let Urbšys bring by plane on June 10 the President's and the Government's exhaustive explanations on the issue....

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 22.

The Attitude of the Lithuanian Government to the Statement of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR on the Provocations of the Lithuanian Authorities Towards the USSR

June 10, 1940

On June 10, 1940, the Lithuanian Government discussed at the meeting called by the President of the Republic the complications in the relations between the Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Union.

The following conclusions have been reached unanimously:

"The Lithuanian Government regrets that, despite its good intentions, there have been incidents which might have affected the tried and friendly relations between Lithuania and the Soviet Union which have been strengthened by the Mutual Assistance Treaty and by the transfer to Lithuania of her eternal capital Vilnius.

The Government declares its definite and firm loyalty to the friendly relations with the Soviet Union as well as to all the agreements concluded between the Lithuanian Republic and the Soviet Union.

The Government states a number of measures taken to strengthen the protection of the Soviet servicemen in Lithuania; the inquiry into the cases of the Soviet servicemen in Lithuania will be pressed ahead and steps will be taken to punish the persons guilty of complicity or neglect.

As to the allegation of the Soviet Government to Lithuania's military pact with Estonia and Latvia, the Lithuanian Government gives assurances that Lithuania has not concluded such a pact ³¹.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs has been instructed to go to Moscow immediately and, together with the Prime Minister already in Moscow, to inform the Soviet Government on the matter.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs are authorized to submit to the Soviet Government exhaustive information and explanations on the issues of interest for the Soviet Government. . .

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 24-25.

No. 44

Statement of the Soviet Government on the Subject of the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty

June 14, 1940

As a result of the recent exchange of views which took place in Moscow between Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars Molotov, on the one side, and Prime Minister of Lithuania Merkys and Minister of Foreign Affairs Urbšys, on the other side, the Government of the Soviet Union considers the following facts as established:

1. For some months a series of kidnappings of Soviet soldiers from the military bases established in Lithuanian territory under the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Pact, and the torturing of them in order to get secret military information on the Soviet State has been taking place in Lithuania. It is established that the soldier Butayev was not only kidnapped but also murdered by the Lithuanian police after the Government of the Soviet Union presented the demand of extradition. Two kidnapped Soviet soldiers, Pisarev and Shmavgonets, succeeded in escaping from the Lithuanian police, who kidnapped and tortured them. Shutov, a soldier kidnapped in Lithuania, was not found until now. By these actions taken against the Soviet troops in Lithuania, the Lithuanian authorities tried to make unbearable the presence of Soviet troops in Lithuania. This is proved also by such incidents, now frequently occurring, as numerous arrests and the sending to labour camps of Lithuanian citizens who served the Soviet units — workers in dining rooms, laundresses, etc.— and also by

the mass arrests of the workers and technicians, engaged in the building of barracks for the Soviet troops. Those unprovoked and unrestrained repressions against the Lithuanian citizens, engaged in service for the Soviet troops, were intended not only to make impossible the residence of Soviet troops in Lithuania, but also to create a hostile attitude in Lithuania toward the Soviet troops and to prepare aggression against the Soviet military units. All these facts show that the Lithuanian Government is wantonly violating the Treaty of Mutual Assistance concluded with the Soviet Union, and is preparing aggression against the Soviet garrisons, established in accordance with this Treaty.

2. Immediately after the conclusion of the Mutual Assistance Treaty between Lithuania and the USSR, the Lithuanian Government entered into a military alliance with Latvia and Estonia, transforming the so-called Baltic Entente, which was formerly a military alliance only between Latvia and Estonia, into a triple military alliance. The Soviet Government considers as established that this military alliance was directed against the Soviet Union. In connection with the entrance of Lithuania into this military alliance, the relations between the military staffs became closer and were kept secret from the USSR. It is known that in February, 1940, there was established a printed organ of this military Entente, *Revue Baltique*, published in English, French, and German. All these facts prove that the Lithuanian Government brutally violated the Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty of Mutual Assistance which had forbidden either to conclude "any alliance or to take part in coalitions directed against contracting parties" (Article 6 of the Treaty).

All these violations of the Soviet-Lithuanian Pact and the hostile action of the Lithuanian Government toward the USSR took place irrespective of an exclusively well-disposed and in reality a pro-Lithuanian policy of the Soviet Union toward Lithuania, to which the Soviet Union, as it is well known, on its own initiative ceded the city of Vilnius and its region.

The Soviet Union considers that the present situation cannot be continued. The Soviet Government considers it necessary and urgent:

1. That the Minister of the Interior, Skučas, and the Director of the Security Department, Povilaitis, be immediately delivered to the judicial authorities and tried as directly guilty of acts of provocation committed against the garrisons of the Soviet Union in Lithuania.

2. That a Government be immediately formed in Lithuania capable of assuring and determined to assure the proper fulfilment of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and Lithuania and to suppress firmly the enemies of this Treaty.

3. That a free entry into the territory of Lithuania be immediately assured for units of the army of the Soviet Union which will be stationed in the most important centres of Lithuania and which will be sufficiently numerous to assure the enforcement of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and Lithuania and to put an end to acts of provocation directed against the garrisons of the Soviet Union in Lithuania.

The Soviet Government considers that the fulfilment of these demands is a basic condition without which the Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty of Mutual Assistance cannot be carried out honestly and in good faith. The Soviet Government will wait for the answer of the Lithuanian Government until 10 a.m. of June 15. The failure to respond at the established time will be considered as a refusal to carry out the above mentioned demands of the Soviet Union.

Rytinis Lietuvos aidas, June 16, 1940, No. 281.

No. 45

Extract from the Telegram of Lithuanian Minister to USSR, Natkevičius, Sent to Kaunas on the Presentation of the Lithuanian Government's Reply to the Demands of the Soviet Government

June 15, 1940

At 7 Mr. Turauskas reported that the Government had decided to meet the demands of the USSR. The form of the reply itself was left to Mr. Urbšys's discretion.

At 9 we telephoned the Council of People's Commissars to inquire if we could be received immediately by the Chairman of the Council of Commissars as the reply was to be given till 10 a.m. On receiving a positive answer, we arrived in the Kremlin at 9.40.

Mr. Urbšys said that Lithuania accepted the three demands made by the Soviet Union. As to paragraph 2, he could inform that the Government had already resigned... and the President had asked General Raštikis to form a new government³²....

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 20, l. 27.

CHAPTER II

INTERNAL SITUATION

Lithuania was an agrarian country: about 70 per cent of the labour force was engaged in agriculture and only 6-7 per cent in industry. The main importers of the agricultural produce were Britain and Germany. They dictated Lithuania the conditions of trade and prices — while buying agricultural products on the cheap, they sold their industrial goods dear. Certain branches of Lithuanian industry were almost completely controlled by foreign capital. The foreign monopolies derived large sums in the form of interest and dividends from the capital invested in Lithuanian economy. The drain of capital did not stimulate the country's industrial development. Lithuania's national economy, therefore, was directly affected by various economical and social upheavals endured by the capitalist system, which even more arrested the country's economic development.

Between 1913 and 1939 the volume of the industrial output in Lithuania increased only 2.6 times. For comparison, it should be noted that in 1940-1974, i.e. in the period of Soviet power, it increased more than 40 times.

The Lithuanian bourgeoisie which was in power in 1919-1940 constituted 10-12 per cent of the population and was unhomogeneous. It consisted of upper, middle and petty bourgeoisie the interests of which were voiced by the Nationalist, Christian Democratic, Populist, and Social Democratic parties.

The Christian Democratic Party was supported by the clerical urban and rural bourgeoisie. The programme of

the party proclaimed democratic freedoms. However, while in power in 1919-1926, it did its best to curtail them, resorted to reprisals against the workers' movement, persecuted the progressive public figures, and sought to establish dictatorial rule.

The Populist Party represented the liberal middle and partly petty bourgeoisie. Until 1924 this party made a bloc with the Christian Democrats and, being in power together with the latter, followed the same course and suppressed the civic rights.

Ideological and political opportunism was characteristic of the Social Democratic Party. In fact, it served the interests of the privileged classes and not those of the working people. Social democracy in Lithuania, therefore, was devoid of vitality, and during the last years of bourgeois rule it practically ceased to manifest itself as a political trend.

From June 1926, the Populists and the Social Democrats were in power together. At that time some reforms were undertaken in Lithuania which somewhat facilitated the political activity of the working people. On December 17, 1926, however, the Nationalists, who had only 3 seats out of 85 in the Seimas (Diet), together with the Christian Democrats mounted a fascist coup d'état and seized power. The Government of the Populists and the Social Democrats made no attempt to prevent the coup although it had every opportunity to restrain the plotters.

The regime of the Nationalists (Tautininkai) who had usurped the power in Lithuania lasted thirteen and a half years — from December 17, 1926, till June 15, 1940. The Nationalists were the most reactionary party of the urban and rural bourgeoisie and big landowners. In its ideology it mainly followed the doctrines of Italian and German fascism trying to make them "Lithuanian".

Just after the coup, the parties of the Populists and the Social Democrats found themselves in opposition. The Christian Democrats shared power for some time with the Nationalists. At the beginning of 1927, however, the Na-

tionalists ended their bloc with the Christian Democrats and ousted the latter from the government.

In 1929 the ruling Nationalist Party also split up. One of the bosses of the Nationalists, Prime Minister Augustinas Voldemaras who sought to concentrate the whole power in his hands, was dismissed from the government. After this split, a new opposition — the supporters of Voldemaras — emerged.

The conflict of the Nationalists with the Christian Democrats and the Voldemaras supporters added to the differences among the bourgeois circles. The front of the bourgeois opposition to the Nationalists widened. Uprisings and putches against the Nationalist Government were arranged by the Populists, the Social Democrats, the Christian Democrats and the Voldemaras supporters. All in all, there were seventeen uprisings between 1926 and 1940. Except for several months in 1926, until late in 1938 martial law remained in force in Lithuania.

The instigators and the leaders of the uprisings were usually court-martialled. The repressions kindled the passions of the bourgeois opposition circles and aggravated the situation within the ruling Nationalist Party itself. All this considerably weakened the power of the bourgeoisie and reduced its ability to handle the country's political and economic life with more or less success.

The Lithuanian Communist Party, founded in 1918, was the only political party that defended the interests of the working people. Throughout the whole period of the bourgeois rule, it acted illegally, suffering constant persecutions.

Guiding the workers' and peasants' struggle against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the Communist Party rejected uprisings and plots as adventurous forms of struggle, devoid of any social perspective. The Communists were seeking liquidation of the Nationalist regime, social and political liberation of the working people through a revolutionary struggle. They did their best to draw into it the broad masses, always relying, however, primarily on the working class.

During the last years of the bourgeois rule, the working class in Lithuania constituted about 34 per cent of the working population. The country numbered 63,200 industrial, handicraft and construction workers, 17,900 transport and communication workers, 14,000 workers engaged in trade, and 263,000 agricultural workers; in addition, 6,200 workers were employed in the state and administrative apparatus, cultural, educational and health service establishments. The working class also included 54,600 day-labourers and housemaids and 70,000 unemployed.

The major part of the country's population (more than 53 per cent) consisted of small and middle peasants and petty non-agricultural bourgeoisie. The social and economic position of the peasants was very hard. Half of the farms were small (up to 10 hectares) and they owned only 17 per cent of the land. Whereas the rich farmers who possessed 15 per cent of the farms owned 35 per cent of the total land area. In the Lithuanian countryside there were about 300 thousand unemployed or semi-unemployed workers who lived in utter poverty or joined the army of unemployed in towns.

The bourgeoisie realized that it would hardly retain power with the help of repressions alone, that at least small social reforms were inevitable. At long last, the land reform law was adopted in 1922. When it was promulgated, 55,500 landless and about 39,100 insufficiently landed peasants applied for land. According to the data of 1930, 3,090 landless peasants were allotted plots of land of up to 2 hectares and 8,430 were given up to 5.7 hectares. Thus 11,520 landless peasants were allotted plots which did not provide them with means of living. All in all, there were 13,971 peasants who owned plots of land from 1 to 2 hectares, 39,666 peasants who owned from 2 to 5 hectares and 45,882 peasants who owned from 5 to 8 hectares. So the bourgeois reform did not improve the state of the bulk of peasantry.

In view of the agricultural character of Lithuanian economy and its industrial backwardness, the wages of the workers were constantly lower than the cost of living. Ac-

According to official statistic data, the average monthly wages of industrial workers alone were cut by 17 per cent between 1930 and 1938. During approximately the same period, in Kaunas and Klaipėda, where two thirds of Lithuania's industrial workers were employed, the wages decreased respectively by 31 and 24 per cent. The peasants suffered from very low prices of agricultural produce, from high-interest credits and growing taxes. They were sinking deeper in debt and were unable to provide themselves with necessities. In 1925 the total sum of the peasants' debts was 7 million litas (unit of Lithuanian currency), while in 1939 their debts amounted to 277 million litas. Tens of thousands of peasant farms were auctioned off and a large number of indebted farms were sold by their owners themselves to avoid additional expenses incurred by auctioning.

Social inequality, difficult economic position, suppression of political rights stirred up the working people's hatred to the system of exploitation and the reactionary regime.

In 1920-1940, about 4,000 participants of the revolutionary anti-fascist movement were put to trial in Lithuania. Thousands of anti-fascists were sent to concentration camps or banished to live in provincial localities.

Despite repressions, the struggle of the working people and all the progressive public against the reaction and political oppression intensified from year to year.

The Communist Party sought to unite the activity of anti-fascist and other democratic forces of the country, to establish an anti-fascist people's front — a broad union of the working class with those sections of the society that were concerned about democratic freedoms, the struggle against fascism and for social progress.

World War II and the successes scored by the anti-imperialist policy of the Soviet Union considerably weakened the position of imperialism in the Baltic Region and in Lithuania too. At the same time the prospects of anti-fascist revolutionary forces to fight for democratization of the state system improved.

The war between the Western capitalist states and the altered international situation caused great economic difficulties in Lithuania. The lasting economic relations with the Western countries were disrupted at the very beginning of the war as the latter paralysed Lithuania's export and import.

Waging war against Britain and France, Hitler Germany took steps to sever Lithuania and other Baltic States from the political and economical influence of these two powers. This circumstance aggravated the international position of Lithuania. In order to weaken Germany economically, Britain and France declared a blockade war against her. Hitler Germany retaliated upon her enemies. At the same time Germany declared that she would regard Lithuania's economic cooperation with Britain and France as an unfriendly act towards Germany and a violation of neutrality. On November 29 and December 5, 1939, the Lithuanian Minister was summoned to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and given a warning that Lithuania cease her export to England, otherwise her ships would be sunk. On December 9 and 12, 1939, the German Minister to Lithuania Zechlin during his talk with Lithuanian Prime Minister Merkys and Minister of Foreign Affairs Urbšys also demanded to stop Lithuania's trade with Britain and France.

Lithuania had to yield to Germany's pressure. Rupture of economic relations with Britain and other West European countries was a painful blow to the country's economy. Lithuania found it more and more difficult to obtain necessary goods and raw materials from belligerent Germany.

Many industrial enterprises were cutting their production. The Treasury funds were also running low. The economic position of industrial and office workers and intelligentsia was very hard. Their purchasing power lowered because the prices of foodstuffs and manufactured goods were constantly rising, while their wages and salaries remained unchanged. Although strongly felt before, unemployment was still growing. All these things sharp-

ened the class contradictions, aggravating the political situation in the country.

In 1940 the ruling circles met the approach of May Day with apprehension. They feared lest this holiday of the working people might turn into a general demonstration of the working people against the Nationalist regime and cause revolutionary upheavals. District chiefs of the state security police were instructed to arrest all the known Communists, to liquidate underground printing presses and thus prevent the publication of May Day leaflets. The measures to be taken to prevent the May Day demonstration in Lithuania were discussed even at the government level; contacts were maintained with the German Gestapo and the security police head-quarters of Latvia and Estonia.

At the beginning of 1940, the relations between Lithuania and the Soviet Union became strained. They were aggravated by the agents of Western states sent to Lithuania and by the disloyalty of the Government to the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty concluded in 1939. The pro-Nazi policy of President Smetona contributed to it too. The Communists and all the anti-fascist forces made efforts to prevent the reactionaries from ruining the treaty. The movement was joined by people of various social levels. The Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party in its appeal of May 31, 1940 — "Down with the provocations against the Soviet Union! We demand the resignation of the reactionary Merkys-Skučas Government as the main perpetrator of the provocations" — called on the workers and peasants to fight for democratic rights, to protest against anti-Soviet provocations, to demand of the Government full observation of the Mutual Assistance Treaty, to seek closer relations with the Soviet Union which were decisive in securing Lithuania's independence and future *. The Nazi terror in the territories occupied by Germany as well as in Germany itself showed the Lithuanian people what awaited them in case Lithuania fell into the hands of Hitler.

* *Lietuvos Komunistų partijos atsišaukimai*, pp. 451-453.

On the evening of June 14, the Soviet Government, through the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow, handed in a note which stated the anti-Soviet provocations and violations of the Mutual Assistance Treaty that had occurred in Lithuania and made demands essential for the preservation of the treaty. The Lithuanian Government had to respond to these demands by ten o'clock in the morning of June 15, 1940.

To discuss the demands, a meeting of the Lithuanian Government was called at one o'clock in the night of June 15. President Smetona made an attempt to exploit the situation for provoking a conflict between Lithuania and the Soviet Union and to demonstrate his pro-German policy. However, most Government members were unaware of the President's secret anti-Soviet schemes and his deals with the Nazis. Therefore, they did not support the offer to involve Lithuania in a military conflict with the USSR, but sought to improve the relations with the Soviet Union and proposed to meet the demands of the Soviet Government. Commander of the Army General Vitkauskas was among most resolute opponents of the President's political plans. Even the Prime Minister disapproved of them. The demands of the Soviet Government were accepted by the majority of the Government. At nine o'clock on June 15, 1940, Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Urbšys and Minister to the Soviet Union Natkevičius handed in the reply to the Soviet Government to the effect that the terms laid down by it to preserve the Mutual Assistance Treaty were accepted.

Facing a crisis in his home and foreign policy, finding no support in the nation, Army and Government, unwilling, however, to alter the political course agreed upon with the Nazis, Smetona decided to leave the country and go to Germany. Prime Minister Merkys did not approve of this intention and tried to persuade him not to give up his post and not to leave Lithuania. But the President was adamant. At about five o'clock on June 15, he left Kaunas for Germany after signing the constitutional acts on the appointment of Prime Minister Merkys Acting President.

The Minister of Defence withdrew to Germany together with Smetona. After the flight of the President and the Minister of Defence, the State Defence Council ceased to exist. The President had also been Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Merkys, who assumed the President's office, appointed Commander of the Army General Vitkauskas Minister of Defence. Thus General Vitkauskas became responsible not only for the army, but also for the matters of the country's defence. So the key position in the government was taken by a man closely connected with anti-fascists.

At three o'clock on June 15, 1940, an order of the day to the army on according a friendly meeting to the additional units of the Soviet Army entering Lithuania, issued by Commander of the Army Gen Vitkauskas and Chief of the General Staff Gen Pundzevičius, was announced over the radio. In this way the broad masses were informed that the army was for friendly relations with the Soviet Union — consequently, it was siding with the people. This circumstance stirred up the activity of anti-fascist forces.

Acting President Merkys instructed Minister of Justice Tamošaitis to issue warrants to arrest the former Minister of Internal Affairs Skučas and Director of the State Security Department Povilaitis who were accused of anti-Soviet provocations. In the afternoon of June 15, they were arrested on the German border in the environs of Jurbarkas and brought to the Kaunas military prison.

Prime Minister Merkys as well as some high-ranking officers and bourgeois politicians made efforts to prevent the President's withdrawal from Lithuania. They were afraid lest the flight of the President and the Minister of Defence disturb the functioning of the state machinery and encourage the activity of anti-fascist forces. On the evening of June 15, Merkys telephoned to Kybartai — a small town on the border with Germany — where Smetona had stopped on his way to Germany. Merkys urged him to return to Kaunas. It was, however, in vain. The former president persisted in his decision.

Seeing the fruitlessness of persuasion, Merkys ordered the frontier guard to prevent Smetona and his companions from crossing the Lithuanian-German border. Thus the President's flight was hindered by the man whom he himself had chosen and appointed his successor. Presently, a government delegation was sent to the border. It was to try to persuade the President to return to Kaunas. But the efforts of the delegation failed too. Smetona crossed the Lithuanian-German border secretly. During his meeting with Greffe, a high-ranking Gestapo official in East Prussia, he asked the latter to report to Berlin that the President of Lithuania had arrived in Germany and was determined to stay there.

On June 16, when it became clear that Smetona had asked the German Government for asylum, the Government headed by Merkys published a statement through the Lithuanian Telegram Agency ELTA and the press: "Yesterday, June 15, President of the Republic Smetona went abroad. Under the circumstances, his departure is regarded by the Government as resignation from office. In accordance with Article 72 of the Constitution of Lithuania, the functions of the President of the Republic are taken over by Prime Minister Antanas Merkys." *

Together with the acts signed by President Smetona on June 15, this statement of the Government finally confirmed the constitutional powers of Merkys as President of the Republic.

After this statement, Acting President of the Republic, Prime Minister Merkys and Deputy Prime Minister Bizauskas signed an act by which the state of emergency was introduced in the whole of Lithuania. According to this act, the military commandants issued orders binding the population to preserve law and order. In this way the reactionary forces themselves paralysed their own activity and prevented the fascist elements as well as other reactionaries from taking action to defend the old regime. This was largely the merit of General Vitkauskas, Minister of Defence and Commander of the Army. The orders men-

* *Lietuvos aidas*, June 17, 1940.

tioned above were issued according to the directions given by General Vitkauskas. Even the most faithful agents of fascist Germany in Lithuania — members of the Kulturerband — were warned by a special order to observe the state of emergency rules*.

On June 16 Merkys made a speech over the radio calling on the population to look into the future with confidence, to preserve law and order. He stressed that the entry of the new Soviet Army units in Lithuania aimed only at ensuring the security of Lithuania and the Soviet Union and that in terms of the Mutual Assistance Treaty this increase in the number of allied troops in the present international situation was fully understandable.

Merkys and some other high-ranking officials of the Nationalist regime still indulged in illusions to preserve the power of the bourgeoisie even if in a democratized form. On June 16 Merkys was visited by a group of senior officers who expressed an opinion that, while forming a new government of Lithuania, party-membership of the Prime Minister and other ministers was of no consequence. This view was shared by the Christian Democrats and the Populists who held a meeting on June 16 to discuss further actions of Merkys and his Government. The Government led by Merkys, however, was not in a position to overcome the crisis of the ruling clique and preserve the power of the bourgeoisie.

In the afternoon of June 15, 1940, a conference of the Secretariat members of the Central Committee and other officials of the Lithuanian Communist Party was called. It was decided to immediately issue a proclamation to all the working people of Lithuania to explain the political situation in the country and point out the tasks facing the workers and all the working people in their struggle against the Nationalist regime. At about the same time a conference of the People's Anti-fascist Front was held. It also decided to prepare and issue a proclamation on behalf of the Committee for the Defence of People's Rights — "To the broad public of Lithuania!"

* CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 19, l. 7.

The Central Board of the People's Aid Association also took the initiative to issue a leaflet to elucidate the political situation.

The proclamation issued by the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party told about the flight of the dictator Smetona abroad; it called on the working people to strive for the formation of a new government that would honestly observe the Mutual Assistance Treaty with the Soviet Union, defend the interests of people, grant the people democratic rights and freedoms, release political prisoners, legalize the Lithuanian Communist Party, trade unions of the workers and ban the Nationalist Party.

The proclamation issued by the Committee for the Defence of People's Rights condemned the anti-Soviet and antinational policy of the Nationalist regime, called for the formation of a new government, emphasizing that the new government would have to protect the interests of the working people and the broad masses of Lithuania. It was also stressed that the new government would have to restore good relations with the Soviet Union.

All these proclamations were distributed in Kaunas as early as in the evening of June 15. Quite a number of them were sent to be disseminated throughout Lithuania. The demands and principles proclaimed in them became the programme of action for the anti-fascist revolutionary forces.

The authorities made an attempt to maintain order with the help of police measures. The police forces, however, were not sufficient. The Government could not seek support of the army because Minister of Defence General Vitkauskas did not give his consent to use the troops to suppress the masses. He approved of the demands made by the Lithuanian Communist Party, shared the Communists' views regarding the formation of a new government and its tasks, and thwarted many a scheme of the reactionaries. The army itself, although slightly admixed with fascist elements and the rich, was primarily composed of workers and peasants.

Finding no support in the army, the old government had no real power to defend its position and suppress the broad masses. Besides, all the bourgeois political parties and the people adhering to them were not prepared to act unanimously.

The ruling Nationalist Party, which had defended the interests of the reactionary circles by means of the dictatorial regime, was not able to carry on its policy. There were no forces in the Lithuanian society to support it. The Christian Democrats, the Populists and the Social Democrats lacked organization and contact with their political adherents. They could not expect to get wide support either. As to the anti-fascist revolutionary forces led by the Communist Party, the situation favoured their activity.

On June 16, the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party discussed the tasks of the Communist Party and took steps to form a People's Government. Secretary of the Central Committee of the LCP Meskupas had talks with Minister of Defence General Vitkauskas on the formation of a new government and the political situation in Lithuania. Vitkauskas agreed to enter the People's Government.

Acting President and Prime Minister Merkys was informed of the efforts made by the Communists and other anti-fascists to set up a new government. He was informed of the matter by Prof. Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius, who had accepted the proposal to enter the People's Government, and by General Vitkauskas. Merkys was aware of General Vitkauskas's relations with the Central Committee of the LCP and the fact that the Communists consulted Vitkauskas about the formation of a new government. Merkys did not interfere with Vitkauskas's contacts with the Communists and allowed them to put forward their proposals for a new government. Merkys, Chairman of the State Council Šilingas, Minister of Finance Galvanauskas and other bourgeois politicians were of the opinion not to avoid participation in the new government together with the Communists. They adhered to this view in hope that this state of things was but temporary and regarded it as a means

to survive until the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union.

On the morning of June 17, the Secretariat of the LCP Central Committee called a conference of representatives of the Communist Party and the People's Anti-fascist Front to discuss the composition of the new government. The conference nominated journalist Justas Paleckis, an outstanding figure of the People's Anti-fascist Front, for Prime Minister in the new government. Merkys was informed of this nomination. He did not reject Paleckis's candidature. Merkys met Paleckis at the President's residence who informed him of the attitude of the Communist Party towards the new government. Then Merkys signed an act by which he appointed Paleckis Prime Minister and authorized him to form a new government. Later on, by another act Merkys approved the government formed by Paleckis. At the same time, in accordance with Article 72 of the Lithuanian Constitution, he gave over the functions of the President to Paleckis.

On June 17, 1940, Acting President and Prime Minister Paleckis and the members of the new government were sworn in.

The People's Government was formed on the basis of the People's Anti-fascist Front and included progressive political figures of that time.

No. 1

Extract from the Report of the State Security Department on the Deterioration of the Working People's Economic Conditions

September 12, 1939

It is rumoured among the citizens of Kaunas that our supplies of liquid fuel are running short. Although kerosene, gasoline and gas oil are rationed, the supplies are not going to last more than a month. . . . Even now the army

lorries and motorized units are short of gasoline and gas oil, while the Air Force pilots are not able to carry out their flying exercises. Such rumours are causing apprehension that in case of war the motorized units of our army might not be able to operate properly.

Other institutions are faced with similar problems. In the first days of the war, a Belgian ship, without being warned, brought several thousand tons of rails to the port of Klaipėda. The Railway Board failing to supply cars in time, the cargo was unloaded in the so-called free zone where at present German anti-aircraft guns are sited. Now the Germans would not allow to take the rails out. The Pienocentras Co. also sent 16 thousand barrels of butter to Klaipėda in the first days of the war and now the Germans would not allow to ship it to England....

The rationing of kerosene has told badly on the population of lower-income levels. For poor townsfolk and peasants kerosene is a necessity. Now the latter complain they would be deprived of light, while others say they will not be able to cook their meals. Besides, it is complained that lately the prices of firewood have markedly gone up and the supplies are short. The poor also find electricity to be expensive.

The supplies of foreign raw materials and goods are running short. Unless new resources of raw materials are found quickly, the factories will have to close or cut back production. Even now some factories are reducing production and dismissing workers. The Inkaras factory now works four days a week and has sacked about 300 workers. Unless the factory gets raw materials, it will not be able to work longer than for a month. The Livelya factory has also dismissed part of its workers and works now four days a week. So do the Tilmansas's factories. The knitted-wear factory of Brothers Uljamperlis as well as the Guma factory will soon close due to shortage of raw materials.

In view of reduction in production and turnover, all industry, trade and office workers have fears lest they lose their jobs.

In general, anxiety is growing among industrial workers which is caused by unemployment and necessity to make provision of necessities. The workers have no spare money for that purpose, while the well-to-do circles are losing no time to provide themselves for eventualities. Thus the workers feel they are being denied livelihood which harbours resentment and hatred among the social classes.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 10-11.

No. 2

Extract from the Report of the State Security Department on the Deterioration in the Workers' Economic Conditions and the Sentiments of Peasantry

September 16, 1939

... At present, with the prices of foodstuffs, fuel and clothes rising, the workers are showing anxiety. In Kaunas the price of bread has gone up by 5 cents per kilo, flour by 5 cents, semolina by 5 cents, oil by 50 cents, a tin of sprats by 10 cents. The prices of coffee, dried fruit and spices have also risen.

The workers are indignant that, while they are in want of many things, the well-to-do have in store all sorts of goods. They say it is necessary to "search" the houses of all well-off people as they have made provision of various things, also for the purpose of profiteering. Furthermore, everybody storing up goods should be severely punished. Only in this way injustice in distributing goods between the well-to-do and the poor can be eliminated.

The peasants are no less affected by those developments....

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 12-13.

TASS Dispatch to Moscow on the Sentiments of the Kaunas Public after the Transfer of the Vilnius Region to Lithuania

October 11, 1939

The news that Vilnius and the Region of Vilnius were to be transferred to Lithuania immediately spread throughout the country. As soon as it was announced over the radio, the whole city of Kaunas displayed the national flags. A festive atmosphere, unseen and unheard-of heretofore, has pervaded the city. The streets are overcrowded with rejoicing people who congratulate each other and even kiss. A demonstration of students marched along the central street — Laisvės alėja — singing national songs. It was joined by all other people.

The Kaunas Radio broadcasts national marches, songs and festive music. At 11 o'clock all the offices and enterprises were closed. The workers left their work to join in the demonstration. Press reporters and journalists call on the Soviet Mission asking for the portraits of Lenin, Stalin, Molotov and Voroshilov.

Public figures and private citizens telephone the Soviet Mission to express their gratitude. They say that the treaty between the Soviet Union and Lithuania has realized the aspirations of the Lithuanian people. At 10.30 the first demonstration with greetings and slogans — "Hurrah for the Soviet Union!" — marched by the Mission.

In the streets of Kaunas, meetings and demonstrations are being held all day long. Till late at night, crowds of up to 500-700 people keep passing by the Soviet Mission shouting "Long live the Soviet Union! Long live the Soviet Government!" A delegation of the Society to Study the Culture of the USSR and two delegations of workers called on the Soviet Mission and made a request to give their gratitude to the Soviet Government and the leaders Stalin and Molotov. During their meetings the workers demand amnesty for prisoners and express dissatisfaction with the

present government. At one meeting posters were displayed with the inscription: „Long live the USSR — protector of Lithuania“. The police took that poster and another one with a different inscription and tore them to pieces. One worker who tried to interfere was beaten by the police. Four workers were arrested. At another meeting, not far from the President's residence, two workers were arrested for similar slogans addressed to the Soviet Government. In the evening one could see lorries with arrested workers — men and women. It is said that arrests will continue all night and next day. In all the streets the police posts have been strengthened.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 15.

No. 4

Lietuvos žinios, October 11, 1939 — On the Sentiments of the Kaunas Public in Connection with the Signing of the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty and the Return of the Vilnius Region to Lithuania

Yesterday's news from Moscow about the return of Vilnius in accordance with the terms of the treaty signed between Lithuania and the Soviet Union aroused great enthusiasm. From the very morning, the people were agitated, manifesting their desire to demonstrate and hardly suppressing their feelings. At about half past eleven, leaving their work and offices, they came out into the streets and, as usual on such occasions, were hurrying towards the garden of the War Museum.

Suddenly, all the streets and squares and passages to the museum and to the grave of the Unknown Warrior were flooded with people. Yesterday gathered so many people here and they were so headlong as never before. The general enthusiasm was so great that the crowd itself somehow maintained order, there was no crush and everybody was pleased....

The first to address the crowd was General Nagius, Director of the War Museum. Among other things he said:

...Festive mood pervades our souls today. Through suffering and hard experience, we are marching to the bright future of Lithuania, in which all people would be happy and comfortable, which would have neither the oppressed nor oppressors. We shall march to the Vilnius Region carrying fraternal aid to the people who have passed through terrible ordeals and the war, extending a helping hand to the people of all nationalities living there. With great respect and gratitude we appreciate our great neighbour — the USSR — whose rightful decisions with regard to Lithuania we have witnessed since the year 1920. ...

Lietuvos žinios, October 12, 1939.

No. 5

Extract from the Report of the State Security Department on the Demonstrations Held to Express Gratitude to the Soviet Union for the Return of Vilnius

October 11, 1939

As it has been reported, the Communists arranged another demonstration yesterday opposite the Soviet Mission. For that purpose leaflets were printed in the press and spread among the people. They read: "Comrades! To mark the conclusion of the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Treaty, we call upon everybody to participate in the demonstration. The time and place of gathering: October 12, 17, Laisvės alėja, near the Town Garden". ...

When the police arrested a woman who was distributing the leaflets, about 150 people ran there from the adjoining streets to free the detainee. The police attempted to disperse them. In the clash the Communists wounded

a department official who fired twice in the air in self-defence. The violent participants of this demonstration, about 70 persons, were arrested.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 17.

No. 6

The Programme to Create a Free Labour Republic of Lithuania Handed in by Justas Paleckis to President of Lithuania Antanas Smetona on the Occasion of the Return of the Vilnius Region and the Signing of the Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty

October 11, 1939

During the thirteen years of dictatorship, established by violence and maintained by force, based on autocratic principles and defending the interests of the few, the life in Lithuania has followed the road detrimental to our national development¹. The suppression of the people's rights has caused a dangerous disappointment in the state which, instead of promoting justice and selflessness, raising the cultural levels of the broad masses, in fact has turned into a system defending injustice, arbitrariness, egoism and interests of the few. Lithuania was created on the basis of the laws of a democratic people's republic for which the best sons of Lithuania had fought and died. These laws were approved by the Constituent Assembly. The laws of democracy being trampled upon by the dictatorship, Lithuania was thrown into the slavery of autocracy and became a republic of the wealthy, imitating the worst models of Poland which has recently collapsed.

The last government change, when after the loss of Klaipėda several representatives of the opposition were invited to the "coalition" Government, failed to alter anything in the dictatorial regime². All the attempts even to slightly reform and change the life of Lithuania were re-

buffed by the regime, the intrigues of the Nationalists and the autocracy. Such a state of things ruined the confidence shown by the broad masses of people to the Government on its establishment. The public and the broad masses expected radical changes in the system itself, not a change of persons.

In the face of the serious events of the past days, it is high time to make changes in the morbid system which stifles all creative effort, which is strange to the spirit of the nation, goes against the interests of the Lithuanian people, and alienates them from the state. In order to change it and to establish a new system, the following basic principles are put forward:

1. Lithuania shall be proclaimed a free Labour Republic of Lithuania whose main tasks are the protection of the country's independence, the nation's freedom, the people's rights and improvement in the cultural and material standards of the broad masses. The state shall make every effort and exploit all its resources to fulfil these tasks.

2. The People's Government of the Republic, formed of the men who are known as devoted fighters for people's rights, shall take over the power in accordance with the Constitution the clauses of which shall be used to defend the interests of the people. The head of the government acts as President of the Republic.

3. For the benefit of the people, the People's Government shall be given extraordinary powers to implement the fulfilment of the main tasks, to make changes in the system and to protect the power of the people from any infringements.

4. The present Seimas shall be dissolved and the People's Council of Lithuania shall be set up of the representatives of various trends, nationalities and professions which will assist the government in its work and in maintaining contacts with the people, control the government and discuss drafts of bills. The bodies of self-government shall be replaced according to the procedure established by the People's Government.

5. Since the sad experience of 1926 shows that democratic freedoms³ can be exploited by those betraying the people's interests, for the benefit of the people, restrictions shall be imposed upon the enemies of the people's cause; while in keeping with welfare of the people, freedom of assembly, the right to unite in societies, and the right of personal security shall be granted in order to open the people's eyes on the situation they were kept for 13 years, to explain the rights and the duties of the people and to redeem the falsehoods of the enemies.

6. Full amnesty for political prisoners and political emigrants shall be proclaimed; the wrongs and injustices done by the Nationalists shall be redressed; the laws made during the Nationalist rule and harmful to the interests of the people shall be abrogated; the arbitrary acts and crimes committed during the Nationalist rule shall be investigated and those guilty shall be brought to trial; the officials appointed by the Nationalist Party as active supporters of the regime of violence shall be proclaimed enemies of the people and put under surveillance lest they do harm to the people's power.

7. After certain preparatory work and democratization of the electoral law to the effect that the enemies of the people are prevented from making their way into the governmental organs, new elections to the bodies of self-government, the Seimas and of the President of the Republic shall be proclaimed. The new Seimas shall make changes in the Constitution to make it conform to the conception of the Labour Republic of Lithuania and ensure a firm government serving the interests of the people.

8. The army shall be prepared to be a staunch and conscious defender of the Free Labour Republic of Lithuania. The Lithuanian Šauliai Association shall be reorganized to make it a reliable guard of the people's power.

9. In the field of foreign policy, Lithuania shall maintain good and peaceful relations with all the states and

neighbours; she shall maintain traditionally good relations based on mutual confidence with the great USSR, loyally and faithfully observing the treaties concluded.

10. All the honest citizens, regardless of their social position, political convictions, national and religious differences, who are ready to work devotedly for the cause of Independent Lithuania, the Lithuanian people and all her citizens, are called upon to join in great creative work, the aim of which is to inspire the life of our state and nation with new idealism, with the spirit of renaissance in order to build on the ruins of the ill-fated dictatorship a new, progressive Lithuania, a genuine free Labour Republic.

PII PA, f. 1770, 1939, b. 5, l. 35.

No. 7

Extract from the Report of the State Security Department on the Growth of Influence of the Communist Party among the Workers

October 16, 1939

The recent developments⁴ have made it evident that the Communist agitation finds a good soil among our workers. Even those workers who previously had nothing to do with the Communist activity have come under their influence. A well-known Communist figure, speaking of the present sentiments of the workers, said that the workers themselves are eager to demonstrate. He said that if the Communist Party had a better organized network of agitators, it could arrange several demonstrations a day.

It should be noted that such an allegation is not too exaggerated. . .

However, the party, without refusing minor demonstrations, is determined to instigate a general workers' strike.

The instigation of the strike is said to be well motivated since the economic conditions of the workers have markedly worsened: rise in prices, no shopping on credit, reduction in production, shorter working week, whereas wage

rates remain unchanged. Starting with economic demands, the strike is subsequently to change over to political demands: release of political prisoners, democratic elections to the Seimas, establishment of a democratic government, etc.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 18.

No. 8

Report of the Director of the Police Department, Svilas, to the Minister of Internal Affairs Relative to Construction of New Barracks for Detained Communists at the Dimitravas Concentration Camp

October 25, 1939

Lately the activity of the Communists in Lithuania has intensified. For this reason not a few of them were sent to the institution of forced labour. According to the report of the State Security Department, the Communists are likely to expand their activities and thus more of them will have to be confined in the concentration camp. It is estimated that the number of the new inmates will amount to 300.

Since the present premises of the forced labour camp are overcrowded and will not be able to accommodate such a number of prisoners, I request Your Excellency to give orders to speed up the construction of the barracks.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 20.

No. 9

**On the Economic Difficulties in Lithuania — Extract from
President of the Republic Smetona's Speech at the Meeting
of the Seimas**

November 29, 1939

...Nowadays our country imposes on us more duties. Both the belligerent and non-belligerent nations are having extremely hard time. The hardships brought about by the war tell likewise on those who are not involved in it. The sea-ways being blocked, the trade is disrupted and the exchange of goods with foreign countries has come to a halt. Foreign produce is difficult to obtain, while our own goods do not always reach foreign markets. We are short of certain consumer goods, such as kerosene, prices are rising, the communication is becoming more difficult, apprehension is growing. The funds of the treasury are running short, while the number of hands seeking its help is continuously increasing. This year it is no more possible to live in the same way as last year. Everybody should be thrifty to make both ends meet. The burden of various obligations to the state is becoming ever heavier. To bear it easier, it shall have to be carried by all...

Seimas Verbatim Report, 7th Ordinary Session, 158 Sitting, 1939, p. 138.

No. 10

Extract from the Letter of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to All District and Sub-district Committees on the Tasks of the Revolutionary Tactics of the Communists

December, 1939

...The Mutual Assistance Pact with the Soviet Union and the stationing of the Red Army units in Lithuania have not made the fascist regime and the big bourgeoisie happy. They regard it as a threat to their rule. To all the people, however, it is great happiness because the valorous Red Army defends Lithuania's independence from Hitler Germany. This circumstance enhances the confidence of the working people in their own strength and their determination to fight against the fascist rule and the rule of exploiters in general. Our people is grateful to the Soviet Union for this fraternal help. However, those who think that now the workers and peasants of Lithuania can sit idle in expectation of better times are mistaken. This view shared by some comrades is harmful. It is now that we must give a new impetus to the struggle against the fascist rule, drawing the broad masses into it, in order to defeat the regime finally and to win a democratic republic.

To enable our Party to successfully fulfil the basic tasks, it is necessary to strengthen its ranks by drawing into it the workers and peasants devoted to the revolutionary movement and to continuously increase the number of activists. At the same time we should be vigilant against the attempts of enemy agents to penetrate into the ranks of our Party.

All these questions are to be immediately and thoroughly discussed by the committees, by the meetings of the activists and effected without delay.

Lietuvos TSR istorijos šaltiniai ("Sources of the History of the Lithuanian SSR"), Vol. IV (Vilnius, 1961), p. 741.

No. 11

Secret Order of the Director of the State Security Department, Povilaitis, to the Regional Chiefs of the Security Police and the Chief of the Agency Department on Preventing the Communists from Drawing the Working People into Revolutionary Activities

December 5, 1939

Lately the leaders of the Lithuanian Communist Party have instructed the party activists that an earlier establishment of Soviet power in Lithuania will largely depend upon the efforts and ability of the Communist Party to stir up revolutionary activity among the workers and peasants, particularly that taking the form of public actions, such as strikes of workers and peasants, demonstrations with demands to establish Soviet power. . . .

The Communist propaganda in the future should be encouraging, asserting that the hour of liberation is imminent. The party members, newly admitted candidates and the workers involved in the revolutionary activity should be prepared not to fear participation in public actions. This could be achieved by inspiring them with confidence that the victory of Soviet power was imminent. Attention should be focused on instigating the unemployed workers of the winter season and the workers of public works with a view of involving them in demonstrations.

The regional chiefs and the Chief of the Agency Department are instructed to be vigilant and check the above efforts of the Communists.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 26.

Extract from the Report of the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, Meskupas, to the Executive Committee of the Communist International

December 23, 1939

...After the Munich Agreement, the foreign and home policy of the fascist government was oriented to Hitler Germany. At the same time, under the impact of the Munich policy, the bloc of the Christian Democrats, Populists and Voldemaras supporters emerged the programme of which was the following: **Foreign policy.** Consistent orientation to Hitler Germany. Nazi agents — the accomplices of Voldemaras — had to promote this trend. In fact, it meant renunciation of Lithuania's independence. **Home policy.** The autocracy of the bourgeoisie supported by the Seimas. Severe measures shall be enforced to suppress the broad masses of workers and peasants who wish to have freedom of the press and the right to unite in organizations. This bloc is called the Bloc of Žygininkai after the name of the newspaper *Žygis* published in Klaipėda. One of the first issues of the paper said: "Our enemies are Jews, Poles, the Nationalists, etc." Despite the fact that the so-called "democratic" party of the Peasant Populists participated in the bloc, its aim was in fact to establish a fascist regime based on massive support instead of the regime of the Nationalists who lacked the support of masses....

Shortly afterwards, Czechoslovakia and the Klaipėda Territory were occupied. Owing to the indignation of the broad masses and the interference of the Army command which was not willing to share the fate of their Czechoslovak colleagues, the Nationalist Government was forced to concessions. On March 28, 1939, a coalition cabinet was formed which represented the Nationalists, the Christian Democrats, the Peasant Populists and the generals. The new Government pledged to protect to the last the country from occupation, to treat all the citizens equally, regardless of their party-membership, nationality, etc.

Taking into consideration the imminent danger to the independence of Lithuania, the Central Committee at its meeting held in the beginning of April decided: We approve the measures of the Government aiming to protect the country's independence; however, we are going to criticize and fight all the actions that are incompatible with the strengthening of the country's independence. We support the Arms Fund — not to help balance the budget, but in order to buy arms for the defence of the country. We call on the masses to join the Šauliai Association and take the initiative in setting up such organizations. The most important prerequisite of the country's defence, however, is organizing the broad masses in town and in country⁵. We demanded freedom to organize defence, democratic rights, an amnesty for the real defenders of the country and to purge the army and the state apparatus from German and Polish spies. We also demanded that the burden of economic difficulties caused by the occupation of the Klaipėda Territory should not be shouldered by the working people but by the rich. In view of the threat to the country's independence, we decided not to call upon people to strike on the 1st of May. At first, the people really enjoyed more freedom. Mass meetings were held in many places at which demands were made to defend the country, to declare an amnesty, to ban the fascist Nationalist Party, to grant democratic rights, to reduce taxes, etc. Factory workers held special meetings at which they discussed their situation, demanded freedom for trade unions, improvement of their working conditions, an amnesty, etc. The Government and the reactionary leaders of the Peasant Populist Party were frightened by this mass movement and began imposing restrictions. Meetings were banned, press censorship was tightened. In spite of the Government's promises, the Nationalist Party was not banned — it recovered after the blow it had sustained. The leaders of the Christian Democrats and the Peasant Populists virtually acted as rescuers of the bankrupt regime of the Nationalists. Therefore, we are fighting them with might and main. When a big workers' strike⁶ began in Kaunas in July — over

2,000 workers were on strike — the Government threw the mask off and resorted to such fascist terror against the workers that was rarely made use of even by the Government of the Nationalists. Thus the coalition Government completely compromised itself in the eyes of the workers and peasants and we declared it a fascist government, no better than the governments of the Nationalists....

On September 4, an appeal of the Central Committee appeared which said, among other things, that war was a consequence of contradictions between imperialist states and that not only Germany, but also Great Britain and France were to blame for this war. We demanded a complete neutrality of Lithuania, we demanded to defend this neutrality from Germany and Poland by all the means available, because they both were equally dangerous. Later on, we happened to read proclamations issued by the Communist Parties of Norway and Sweden, and they proved rather similar to ours.

We must admit, however, that for some time we failed to realize that this war was an imperialistic one for both sides and did not differ from the war of 1914-1918. It can be largely accounted for by the public declarations made by the leaders of the British and French Communist Parties. Only Comrade Brauder⁷ elucidated this question two weeks later. But he was inconsistent in his explanation of the change in the policy of neutrality. The liberation march of the Red Army and the speech of Comrade Molotov⁸ made it clear to us. Later on we received sufficient materials on the question: the letter of Comrade André Marti⁹, the appeal of the Communist International on the occasion of the 22nd Anniversary of the October Revolution, the article by Comrade Dimitrov¹⁰ "The War and the Working Class in the Imperialist Countries", etc.

The liberation march of the Red Army and the Mutual Assistance Treaty with Lithuania have caused immense revolutionary upsurge. The prestige of the Party has considerably grown. Here is a typical example: in October the People's Aid, the former Red Aid¹¹, collected in Kaunas 15,000 litas for the political prisoners instead of the

usual sum of 3,500-4,000 litas. Everywhere among the workers, peasants and soldiers, the revolutionary activity has intensified. The discipline in the army is poor. There were cases when officers were beaten by soldiers (in Telšiai). In many places the soldiers read our illegal press in public in the barracks. In some places, among the conscripts regiment committees emerged which exerted certain influence upon the soldiers. The ruling circles are at a loss. When the Red Army approached the border of Lithuania, they rushed, including the leaders of the Peasant Populist Party, to Hitler for help with a proposal to make Lithuania a protectorate. In two proclamations — to the population and to the soldiers — we wrote: should the traitors of Lithuania succeed in establishing Hitler's protectorate in Lithuania, we would call upon all the workers, peasants, all the honest citizens and all the soldiers to rise in arms against the traitors. Relying on our new powerful neighbour (the Soviet Union), we shall be able to defend our independence. . . .

We call to fight against fascism for a democratic republic, for a government representing the interests of the broad masses of working people that would be honestly intended to implement the Mutual Assistance Treaty with the Soviet Union, as it is the only guarantee of Lithuania's independence. . . .

PII PA, f. 77, ap. 23, b. 5, l. 11-15.

No. 13

**Extract from the Report of the State Security Department
on the Strike of the Workers Employed in Public Works
at Lampėdžiai**

February 8, 1940

In the morning of February 8, about 1,500 workers employed in the Nemunas bank consolidation work at Lampėdžiai went on strike. Although they have not yet made

any demands, it seems that the main cause of the strike is the reduction in the number of working days. The strikers have set up a 16-person committee which is to deal with the Town Council. The strikers refused to send a delegation to the Town Hall and insisted that a representative of the Town Council should come to their working site for a talk. Upon receiving a negative answer, about 700 workers gathered and, instigated by agitators, began their march, as they said, to the Kaunas Town Hall and to the Minister of Internal Affairs. The ranks of the marching workers were met by a mounted police force. The workers ignored the order of the police to disperse. When the police began to disperse them, they attacked the policemen and the horses with spades. The clash lasted for about half an hour. During it, a woman and two men were injured and taken to the town hospital in an ambulance. Twenty-two men and twenty-one women were arrested.

The investigation is carried on by the police.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 28.

No. 14

Extract from the Report of the State Security Department on the Difficult Economic Conditions of the Workers

March 11, 1940

At present the economic conditions of the working people have considerably deteriorated. Since the end of 1939, i.e. since the increase of wages by 5-15 per cent the prices of many foodstuffs and fuel have risen by 30 per cent and are still rising. Other necessities and their production have also risen in price, whereas rents, against expectation, have not lowered.

The rise in food prices has had particularly negative effect on the workers. In their opinion, the press, too, sided with the tradesmen. One week the press said there would be no rise in the prices of flour and bread, while another

week it announced the rises in the price of these products. The prices of sugar were raised unreasonably, allegedly motivating it by the prices of sugar abroad, whereas in reality they are much lower there. The workers maintain that many factories are still using raw materials acquired at low prices before the war, while their produce is sold at higher prices. Moreover, before the war the factories derived high profits, so why they could not be used to equalize the prices of present-day production. The employers, however, have not the slightest intention to do so, on the contrary, they are attempting to break the laws on labour protection, sack workers, etc. And they manage to do it.

In fact, during that period the workers' wages have lowered as many factories, reducing production due to shortage of raw materials, have introduced a shorter working week. Some factories have dismissed part of the workers. There is not much prospect for construction workers because no large-scale construction is planned for the coming season. The earning of individual artisans have also lowered as the number of orders is dwindling.

These phenomena, besides increasing the workers' anxiety about their economic position, also cause their dissatisfaction with the present social system. This dissatisfaction can also manifest itself publicly. It can be seen from the workers' declarations made at public meetings in the Palace of Labour and at their secret gatherings. The strike of the workers employed in the public works at Lampëdžiai and short protest strikes of factory workers instigated subsequently are enough to characterize the sentiments of the workers today. . .

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 29-30.

No. 15

Secret Order of Director of the State Security Department, Povilaitis, to Regional Chiefs of the Security Police and the Chief of the Agency Department on the Measures to Prevent the Preparations of the Communists for the Celebration of May Day in Lithuania

March 27, 1940

The leaders of the LCP have instructed all the party organizations and members to start preparations for May Day which is to be marked by a general stoppage and big workers' demonstrations. The party members are instructed not to leave out a single workshop without inquiring if the workers agree to join in the stoppage and the demonstrations on May 1. The leadership of the Communist Party has requested to communicate the collected information, both positive and negative, as early as possible. On the basis of the information received, it was going to make the final decision concerning the programme of the May Day celebration and the call to the general strike. The party members are obliged to do their utmost and to call all workers to join in the strike of May 1.

If the programme provided for May Day were successfully accomplished, the party will take steps to initiate a general strike making political and economic demands.

The regional chiefs and the Chief of the Agency Department are instructed to make every effort to prevent the Communist agitation and any kind of public action arranged by the Communists.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 17, l. 32.

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party Calling on Workers and Peasants to Protest Against the Anti-Soviet Provocations Organized by Reactionaries in Lithuania and Demand from the Government to Observe the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Treaty

May 31, 1940

Comrades, all the citizens of Lithuania! We all know what great help Soviet Union has rendered and continues to render us. It has returned to us the capital Vilnius and the Vilnius Region. The Red Army is guarding our independence. Only thanks to the Soviet Union, Lithuania has so far avoided the horrible war that has turned the towns and villages of Belgium, Holland, Norway, Poland, France into heaps of ruins. It is against this friendly country that the reactionary circles supported by the authorities are plotting. It is evident that those provocations against the USSR are at the same time provocations against Lithuania, against our people!

These acts are by no means "a nuisance" or "a misunderstanding" as the bourgeois newspapers try to put it. The whole secret anti-Soviet campaign, the crusade against those who sympathize with the USSR, the unheard-of terror against the Communists and against the workers and peasants in general and, finally, the acts of provocation and the "disappearance" of the Red Army men are links of the same chain.

All this shows that the reactionary government is not loyal to the treaty concluded with the USSR. It also shows that the reactionary circles who play the decisive role in the government maintain secret relations with imperialists and are trying to undermine the Mutual Assistance Treaty with the USSR.

We call upon everybody, regardless of differences in views, on those who cherish Lithuania's future to protest against the anti-Soviet provocations. We call on everybody

to join in the fight for a consistent observation of the Mutual Assistance Treaty with the USSR, for closer relations with the Soviet Union. It is on these things that Lithuania's future depends. We call on everybody to fight against the Merkys-Skučas Government, to fight for an amnesty for political prisoners, for democratic freedoms.

Away with the anti-Soviet provocations!

Away with the anti-Soviet campaign!

We demand consistent observation of the Mutual Assistance Pact with the Soviet Union!

We demand the resignation of the Merkys-Skučas Government!

We demand a purge of the state apparatus and the army from imperialist agents.

Out with the Russian White Guards and all the imperialist agents!

We demand an amnesty for political prisoners!

Down with the regime of terror!

PII PA, f. 1770, 1940, b. 1, l. 80.

No. 17

Act of President of the Republic Smetona Concerning the Dismissal of Minister of Internal Affairs Skučas Accused of Anti-Soviet Provocations in Lithuania

June 13, 1940

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 97) and on representation of the Prime Minister (June 13, 1940, No. 654), I relieve Minister of Internal Affairs Retired Brig Gen Kazimieras Skučas from office at his own request.

Kaunas, June 13, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, June 17, 1940, No. 710.

No. 18

ELTA Announcement on the Dismissal of Director of the Security Department Povilaitis Accused of Anti-Soviet Provocations in Lithuania

June 13, 1940

Director of the State Security Department Augustinas Povilaitis is relieved from office from June 13.

Rytinis Lietuvos aidas, June 13, 1940.

No. 19

Order on Taking Over the Functions of Minister of Internal Affairs

June 14, 1940

Of June 14 of the present year, I took over the functions of Minister of Internal Affairs from Retired Brig Gen Kazimieras Skučas and became Minister of Internal Affairs *ad interim*.

Merkys
Prime Minister, Minister
of Internal Affairs *ad interim*

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 19, l. 4.

P o n u i


ats. pulk. leit. Antanui Merkiui,

Ministrai Pirmininkui

orlais/

Remdamasis Lietuvos Konstitucija /97 str./ is
Tamstos 1940 m. birželio 15 d. raštu Nr. 660, priimu Tam-
tos ir Tamstos sudarytos Ministrų Tarybos atsistatydinimą
ir pavedu Tamstai ir Tamstos sudarytai Ministrų Tarybai
toliau eiti savo pareigas, kol bus paskirta nauja Ministrų
Taryba.

K a u n a s, 1940 m. birželio 15 d.


RESPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTAS

MINISTRAS PIRMININKAS

Act of President of the Republic Smetona authorizing Prime Minister
Merkys to stay in office.

No. 20

Act of President of the Republic Smetona Concerning the
Authorization of Merkys and the Council of Ministers
Formed by him to Continue in Office

June 15, 1940

To Mr. Antanas Merkys, Retired Lt Col, Prime Minister
In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Ar-
ticle 97) and your resignation of June 15 No. 660, I accept

your resignation and the resignation of the Council of Ministers formed by you, and authorize you and the Council of Ministers formed by you to continue in office until a new Council of Ministers is appointed.

Kaunas, June 15, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, June 17, 1940, No. 710.

No. 21

Act of President of the Republic Smetona Concerning the Appointment of Prime Minister Merkys Acting President of the Republic

June 15, 1940

To Mr. Antanas Merkys, Retired Lt Col, Prime Minister
In view of my illness, in accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 71), I request you to substitute for me in the duties of the President of the Republic.

Kaunas, June 15, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, June 16, 1940, No. 709.

No. 22

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to All the Working People Calling to Establish a Genuine People's Government, to Free Political Prisoners, to Legalize the Communist Party, Trade Unions and to Grant the People Democratic Rights and Freedoms

June 15, 1940

Comrades workers, peasants, all working people! Eight months have passed since the conclusion of the Soviet-Lithuanian Mutual Assistance Treaty. During this period

we could well evaluate the importance of the treaty for Lithuania's independence. The Soviet Union returned to Lithuania her capital Vilnius and the Vilnius Region formerly occupied by Poland. It is only owing to the USSR that Lithuania has escaped the terrible fate of Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium. The USSR also extends Lithuania an extensive economic aid. Therefore, all the working people, all the patriots of Lithuania are vitally interested in consistently and honestly implementing the Soviet-Lithuanian Treaty, in seeking ever closer cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Only the enemies of Lithuania's independence and her people are against this treaty. The Government of Černius-Skučas as well as that of Merkys-Skučas which succeeded it, both representing the reactionary circles of Lithuania, began to sabotage the implementation of the Mutual Assistance Treaty from the very beginning....

The Communist Party made all these facts public and called upon the broad masses to fight against the violation of the treaty, for a consistent observation of the treaty, for cooperation with the USSR, for a government that would honestly and sincerely observe the treaty....

Comrades! The new government will have to implement the treaty with the USSR and defend the interests of the people not in words but in deeds. With this aim in view, democratic rights should be restored to the people, all the political prisoners — the best sons and daughters of the Lithuanian people — should be immediately released from jails and concentration camps, the Communist Party should be legalized as it is the only party in Lithuania that is consistently defending the interests of the people; the workers' trade unions should be legalized; the imperialist agents, including the Trotskyites, should be detained; the Nationalist Party — the party of the people's enemies representing the most reactionary circles in Lithuania — should be banned. Its leader, the oppressor of the people, blood-sucker and villain Smetona, having suppressed the

country under the fascist yoke for years, has fled abroad at the critical moment to save his skin. . . .

PII PA, f. 1770, 1940, b. 1, l. 1b.

No. 23

Order to the Army Concerning the Appointment of Div Gen Vitkauskas Minister of Defence *ad interim*

June 15, 1940

Troop Duty

Brig Gen Musteikis has left his post. On the authority of the Prime Minister, I began to act for Minister of Defence from June 15, 1940.

Orders to the Army, 1940.

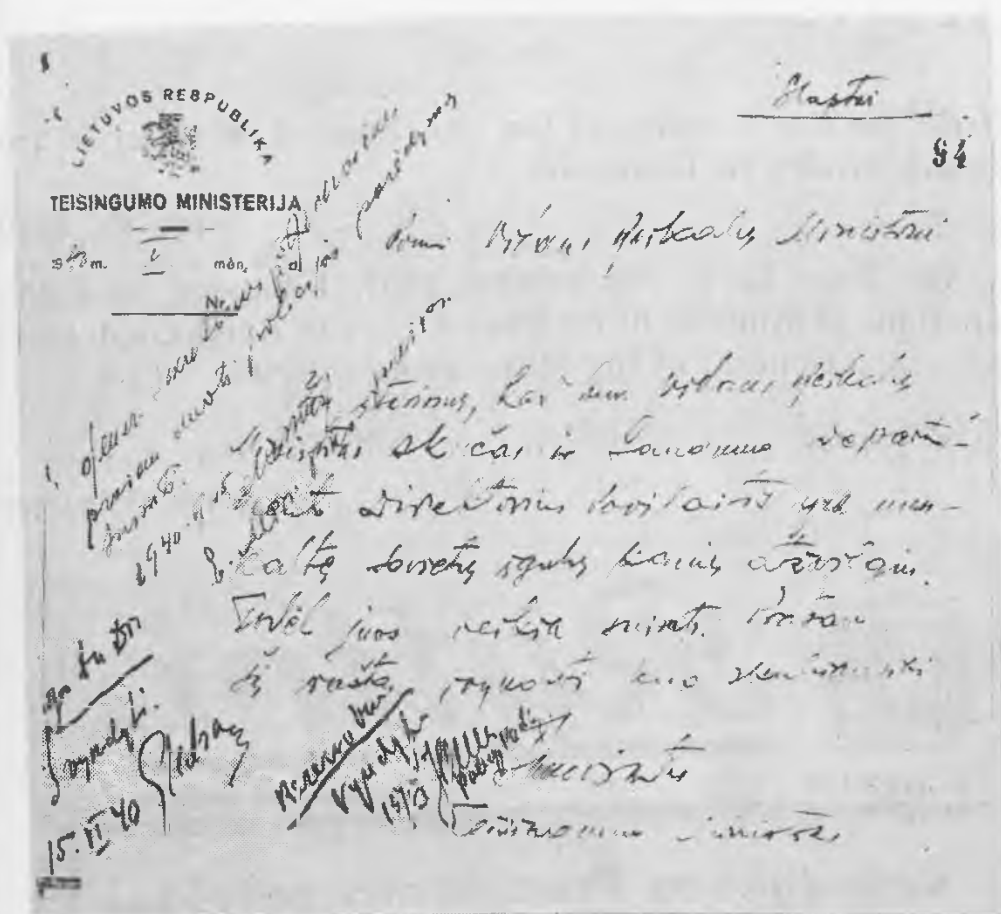
No. 24

Warrant Issued by Minister of Justice Tamošaitis to Arrest Skučas and Povilaitis

June 15, 1940

The former Minister of Internal Affairs Kazimieras Skučas and Director of Security Department Augustinas Povilaitis are suspected of offence committed against the servicemen of Soviet garrisons. Therefore, they shall be arrested. The warrant shall be executed urgently.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 19, l. 5.



The original of document No. 24, signed by Minister of Justice Tamosaitis, bears three resolutions all dated June 15, 1940:

1. To General Secretary Giedraitis

I request you to instruct the police to carry out the arrest.

Merkys

Acting Prime Minister

2. To Director of Police Department

To execute

Giedraitis

3. To Reserve Commander

To execute

Jankauskas

Kaunas Police Chief

No. 25

Order on the Transfer of the Functions of Minister of Internal Affairs to Giedraitis

June 15, 1940

On June 15 of the present year, I handed over the functions of Minister of Internal Affairs to Balys Giedraitis, Secretary General of the Ministry *ad interim*.

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 19, l. 6.

A. Merkys
Prime Minister



No. 26

Statement of the Lithuanian Government on President of the Republic Smetona's Departure Abroad

June 16, 1940

Yesterday, on June 15, President of the Republic Antanas Smetona went abroad. Under the circumstances, the Government regards his departure as resignation from the office of the President of the Republic. In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 72), the functions of the President of the Republic have been taken over by Prime Minister Antanas Merkys ¹².

Lietuvos aidas, June 17, 1940.

REPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO

A K T A S

lais/

Remdamasis Lietuvos Konstitucija /87 str./ ir
Ministro Pirmininko teikimu /1940 m. birželio 16 d. Nr.
676/, atleidžiu Krašto Apsaugos Ministrą br. gen. Kazį
Musteikį iš jo pareigų.

K a u n a s, 1940 m. birželio 16 d.

E. RESPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO P.

U. MINISTRO PIRMININKO P.
MINISTRO PIRMININKO PAVAUDUOJAS

No. 27

Act of Acting President of the Republic Merkys Concern-
ing the Dismissal of Minister of Defence Musteikis

June 16, 1940

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Ar-
ticle 97) and on representation of the Prime Minister
(June 16, 1940, No. 676), I relieve Minister of Defence Brig
Gen Kazys Musteikis from office.

Kaunas, June 16, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, June 17, 1940, No. 710.

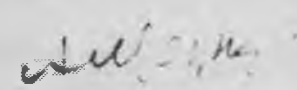
REPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO

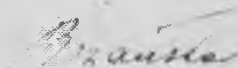
A K T A S

riaus/

Remdamasis Lietuvos Konstitucija /97 str./ ir
Ministro Pirmininko teikimu /1940 m. birželio 16 d. Nr. 675/
skiriu Karinomenis Vadą div. gen. Vincą Vitkauską Kraito
Apsaugos Ministro pareigoms eiti nuo 1940 m. birželio 16
dienos.

K a u n a s, 1940 m. birželio 16 d.


E. RESPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO P.


E. MINISTRO PIRMININKO P.
MINISTRO PIRMININKO PATADUOTOJAS

No. 28

Act of Acting President of the Republic Merkys Concerning
the Appointment of Vitkauskas Minister of Defence

June 16, 1940

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 97) and on representation of the Prime Minister (June 16, 1940, No. 675), Commander of the Army Div Gen Vincas Vitkauskas is appointed Minister of Defence from June 16, 1940.

Kaunas, June 16, 1940.

Vyriausybės žinios, June 17, 1940, No. 710.


REPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO

A K T A S

Įorials/

Remdamasis Lietuvos Konstitucija /139 str./ ir
Ministrų Tarybos 1940 m. birželio 16 dienos pasiūlymu Nr. 674,
skelbia valstybės gynimo metu visoje Lietuvoje nuo 1940 m.
birželio 16 dienos.

K a u n a s, 1940 m. birželio 16 d.


E. RESPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO P.


E. MINISTRO PIRMININKO P.
MINISTRO PIRMININKO P. VADOV. J. S.

No. 29

Act of Acting President of the Republic, Merkys, and Acting
Prime Minister, Bizauskas, Concerning Introduction of the
State of Emergency in Lithuania

June 16, 1940

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Ar-
ticle 139) and on the recommendation of the Council of
Ministers of June 16, 1940, No. 674, the state of emergency
is proclaimed in the whole of Lithuania from June 16,
1940.

Kaunas, June 16, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, June 16, 1940, No. 709.

No. 30

Order of the Kaunas Military Commandant, Colonel Bobelis, to the Population of the City of Kaunas and its Environs to Preserve Law and Order

June 16, 1940

The Acting President of the Republic has proclaimed the state of emergency from June 16 of the present year.

From that day on, according to Article 9 of the Emergency Regulations, in the city and district of Kaunas

I forbid:

§ 1

1. To walk or drive without my permission between 23 and 4 a.m.

2. To arrange marches, demonstrations and gatherings in the streets, squares and other public places without my consent; the police is entitled to halt the traffic anywhere and at any time and to ban even individual persons from staying in the street.

3. To spread rumours causing anxiety and to instigate one part of the community against the other.

4. To offend or to maltreat the servicemen of the friendly army of the USSR and

5. To stop work.

§ 2

All the house owners in the city of Kaunas and in the suburbs are obliged to keep the front doors, gates and wickets closed and locked between 23 and 4 a.m.

§ 3

Restaurants, cafés, bars, cinemas and other places of entertainment shall be closed at 23.

§ 4

All arms and explosives shall be delivered to the local police stations within 48 hours from the moment of the announcement of the present order.

§ 5

Arm shops are forbidden to sell arms and explosives without the permission of the district chief.

§ 6

Without my consent, shooting and hunting are forbidden.

§ 7

Those who disobey the order shall be sent to the forced labour camp for a period of up to one year, to prison for up to three months or shall be fined up to 5,000 litas.

§ 8

Persons guilty of damaging the communication media — railways, telegraph, telephone, bridges, water inlets and other installations — and those who resist the police or use violence against it shall be court-martialled.

Lietuvos aidas, June 17, 1940.

No. 31

**Broadcast Appeal by Acting President of the Republic,
Merkys**

June 16, 1940

Dear Lithuanians and all the inhabitants of the Lithuanian Republic! The unusually rapid succession of international developments has not left out our country either. The radio and press keep informing you of the main events that our country has witnessed in the recent days.

While assessing the newly developed situation, we must bear in mind the matters of vital importance for the life of our nation — the necessary conditions of peace and creative work. We are convinced that the arrival of the Soviet army units in Lithuania is in the interests of the security both of Lithuania and the Soviet Union. Thus these troops have come to us as friendly allied troops. They were met by our army as such and treated as such¹³. All the inhabitants of the country must view and appraise this matter only in this light. In terms of the Mutual Assistance Treaty, the increase in strength of the allied forces in Lithuania is quite understandable. Our internal social, cultural, economic and political affairs should not be affected by it in any way.

The main thing that the Government is concerned about is to observe law and order, to prevent any interruption in the work of state institutions, enterprises and in the sector of private economy. The national economy and creative work in Lithuania will not be disturbed if the Government officials perform their duties diligently, as they have done up to now, and if the broad sections of the population comply with their directions. Hence, normal work in offices, enterprises, workshops, factories, farms and homes is to be carried on quietly. This is the major requirement at the moment.

The honourable, old, beautiful history of the Lithuanian nation, its great achievements in all fields after the resto-

ration of independence, the ability of the Lithuanian people to show their creative power in all endeavours lie deep in our conscience.

In conclusion, I should like to express my firm belief that the Government will succeed in combining the country's vital interests with the circumstances created by the present international developments. Therefore, we need more self-confidence and sense of reality in assessing the situation. At present it is very important to avoid rumours that discourage and cause panic. On the contrary, we must look into the future with confidence and heed only the information coming from authoritative and responsible sources.

Lietuvos aidas, June 17, 1940.

No. 32

XX amžius*, June 16, 1940 — On the Political Situation in Lithuania

In the course of history the Lithuanian nation has passed through many ordeals. We all know what reverses of history it has lived through. We also remember the hardships of the World War, from the ruins of which we arose free and independent.

A new war has broken out. We watched from afar its glow — the struggle of the great powers. The events have come in rapid succession. At present our people finds itself again in a somewhat difficult situation. Now as hitherto, we have no right to have doubts about the future of our nation. Our nation shall live and work, never losing the will to live.

All our citizens and countrymen are, no doubt, surprised by the fact that President of the Republic Antanas Smetona has gone abroad. He left the country at the cru-

* *XX amžius* (The 20th Century): daily organ of the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party.

cial moment. It is difficult at present to assess the fact; it is clear, however, that his flight cannot be regarded as a deed worthy of praise. But one may also say that he took with him the political errors that had been committed. Even this particular circumstance should not make us feel disappointed.

The remaining members of the Government are in contact with the representatives of the Soviet Government. It is to be expected that their contacts and the talks reported yesterday will bring about the results that will satisfy the interests of both the Soviet Union and our nation.

It is clear to everybody that we must take a sober and realistic view of the interests of our great neighbour. We have long been aware of its general principles of peace. We have also repeatedly emphasized its noble attitude towards the freedom of peoples. We all know well that the years of our independence have clearly shown that those principles are not mere verbiage — they have enabled us to maintain good relations and they made it possible to come to an agreement last autumn.

The attitude of our people towards the Soviet Union is not and cannot be changed. True, serious reproaches have been made against our Government. We may only expect that the reproaches incurred by the Government and its separate members will be removed so that the relations with our great neighbour might develop normally in a spirit of mutual confidence. We have no doubt whatever that our nation has never had hostile intentions towards its great neighbour the weight of which we cannot underestimate. . . .

XX amžius, June 17, 1940.

No. 33

Radiogram of Georgy Dimitrov, General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, to the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party Concerning the Programme and Tactics of the Communists in Lithuania

June 17, 1940

The basic task at this stage is the rallying of the masses under the leadership of Communists. Issue legal newspapers. Set up legal trade unions and factory councils, and peasants' committees in the countryside. Demand immediate release of political prisoners. Oust anti-Soviet elements from the army and the state apparatus. Demand confiscation of the property of runaway reactionaries. For the time being, the programme of the Communist activity should not exceed the tasks and principles of people's democracy. Seek the establishment of the people's democratic government, consisting of honest representatives of the people. Immediate participation of Communists in this government is not expedient.

June 17, 1940

PII, Collection of documents No. 505, l. 3
Translated from the German

Ponui

Justui Paleckiiui

oriuis)

Pasirėmęs Lietuvos Konstitucijos 97 str., skiriu Tam-
tą Ministrui Pirmininku ir pavedu Tamatai sudaryti Ministrų Ta-
rybą.

K a u n a s, 1940 m. birželio 17 d.

Antanas
L. RESPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO P.
MINISTRAS PIRMININKAS

No. 34

Act of Acting President of the Republic, Merkys, Concern-
ing the Appointment of Paleckis Prime Minister and
Authorizing him to Form the Council of Ministers

June 17, 1940

To Mr. Justas Paleckis

In accordance with Article 97 of the Constitution of
Lithuania, I appoint you Prime Minister and authorize you
to form the Council of Ministers.

Kaunas, June 17, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, June 17, 1940, No. 710.

No. 35

Presentation of the Government Formed by Prime Minister
Paleckis to Acting President of the Republic Merkys for
Approval

June 17, 1940

Your Excellency President of the Republic

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 97) and your, Mr. President, authorization of June 17, 1940, I have the honour to submit for your approval the Council of Ministers formed by me:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Prime Minister | Justas Paleckis, |
| Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Education <i>ad interim</i> | Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius, |
| Minister of Defence and Commander of the Army | Div Gen Vincas Vitkauskas, |
| Minister of Justice | Povilas Pakarklis, |
| Minister of Finance and Minister of Communications <i>ad interim</i> | Ernestas Galvanauskas, |
| Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Internal Affairs <i>ad interim</i> | Matas Mickis, |
| Minister of Health | Dr Leonas Koganas. |
| To His Excellency Mr. Merkys, Acting President of the Republic | J. Paleckis Prime Minister |

Vyriausybės žinios, June 17, 1940, No. 710.

P o n a u l

Justui Paleckui,

Ministru Pirmininkui

placiatas/

Pasirėmus Lietuvos Konstitucija /87 str./, skiriu Tamstos 1940 m. birželio 17 d. raštu Nr. 677 pristatyti Ministrų Tarybą tokios sudėties:

Ministras Pirmininkas Justas Paleckis,

Ministro Pirmininko Pavaduotojas, Užsienio Reikalų Ministras ir laikinai einas Švietimo Ministro pareigas Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius,

Krašto Apsaugos Ministras ir Karluomenės Vadas div. gen. Vincas Vitkauskas,

Teisingumo Ministras Povilas Pakarklis,

Finansų Ministras ir laikinai einas Susisiekimo Ministro pareigas inž. Ernestas Galvanauskas,

Zemės ūkio Ministras ir laikinai einas Vidaus Reikalų Ministro pareigas Matas Mickis,

Sveikatos Ministras dr. Leonas Koganas.

K a u n a s, 1940 m. birželio 17 d.

Edvardas
E. RESPUBLIKOS PREZIDENTO P.
MINISTRAS PIRMININKAS

MINISTRAS PIRMININKAS

No. 36

Act of Acting President of the Republic, Merkys, Concerning the Approval of the Government Formed by Prime Minister Paleckis

June 17, 1940

To Mr. Justas Paleckis, Prime Minister

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 97), I appoint the Council of Ministers presented by your letter of June 17, 1940, No. 677, of the following composition:

| | |
|--|--|
| Prime Minister | Justas Paleckis, ¹⁴ |
| Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Education <i>ad interim</i> | Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius, ¹⁵ |
| Minister of Defence and Commander of the Army | Div Gen Vincas Vitkauskas, ¹⁶ |
| Minister of Justice | Povilas Pakarklis, ¹⁷ |
| Minister of Finance and Minister of Communications <i>ad interim</i> | Ernestas Galvanauskas, ¹⁸ |
| Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Internal Affairs <i>ad interim</i> | Matas Mickis, ¹⁹ |
| Minister of Health | Dr Leonas Koganas. ²⁰ |

Kaunas, June 17, 1940

A. Merkys
Acting President of
the Republic,
Prime Minister
J. Paleckis
Prime Minister

Vyriausybės žinios, June 17, 1940, No. 710.

Pirm ministras Pirm ministras
J. Paleckis.

Dalyvauja ministrai - V. Krėvė-Mickovi-
čius, div. gen. V. Vitkauskas, E. Gėlvanauškas,
M. Mickis ir L. Koganas.

no Ministrų Taryba, turėdama galvoje,
kad -

1/ ilgosnės vyriausybės deklaracijos
parengimas reikalauja daugiau laiko,

2/ tokia deklaracija reikėtų apvarsty-
ti, kas taip pat reikalauja laiko,

nusistatė šiandien duoti trumpą komu-
nikatą tokio turinio:

"Šiandien susišačiusioji naujoji Vy-
riausybė atliko esančią konkrečią reikšmę, susijusią
su valdžios perėmimo darbu. 18 val. Ministras Pir-
mininkas Justinas Paleckis ir naujosios Vyriausy-
bės nariai davė ištikimybės konstitucijai iškil-
minį pasitarimą. Paskui Ministras Pirm ministras
Justinas Paleckis pareiškė, kad Lietuvos Respublikos Prezi-
dento pareigas išėjęsio Respublikos Prezidento
pareigas antenė marto.

Su savo darbu prapleto Vyriausybė su-
pažindins visuomenę, kad tik sąjūdiuose darbu
tvarkoje nustatys esančius uždavinius!

Ministras Pirmininkas

basanys
Ministrų Tarybos Generalinis
Sekretorius

No. 37

Minutes of the First Meeting of the People's Government Giving Information on the First Steps in the Activity of this Government

June 17, 1940

The meeting was presided by Prime Minister Paleckis.
Participant ministers: Krėvė-Mickevičius, Div Gen Vit-
kauskas, Galvanauskas, Mickis and Koganas.

The question of the Government declaration. The
Council of Ministers, taking into consideration that

1. The preparation of a detailed Government declara-
tion requires time,

2. Such a declaration ought to be discussed which also requires time,

has decided to issue today a short communique the contents of which are the following:

"Today the newly established Government has taken a number of concrete steps in taking over the functions of governing. At 19 Prime Minister Justinas Paleckis and the members of the new Government were sworn in. After that the Prime Minister took over the functions of the President of the Republic from Acting President Antanas Merkys.

The Government will acquaint the public with the programme of its work as soon as the most urgent tasks are established on the agenda."

PII, Collection of documents, No. 409, p. 1.

No. 38

Decision of the People's Government on the Protection of the Lithuanian-German Border and Handing over the Functions of Prime Minister to Prof. Krėvė-Mickevičius

June 18, 1940

The meeting was presided by Acting President of the Republic, Prime Minister Paleckis.

Participant ministers: Prof. Krėvė-Mickevičius, Div Gen Vitkauskas, Pakarklis, Venclova, Galvanauskas, Mickis and Koganas.

On the Protection of the German Frontier

The Council of Ministers, taking into consideration that the protection of the frontier is presently insufficient, has decided to instruct the Minister of Foreign Affairs to approach the authorities of the Soviet Union with a request for help to increase the strength of the police guard on the Lithuanian-German border.

...At the end of the meeting, the Acting President of the Republic and Prime Minister declares that, according

Baigiant posedį, E. Respublikos Prezidento p. Ministras Pirmininkas pareiškia, kad jis pagal Lietuvos Konstitucijos 72 str. Respublikos Prezidento pareigas, o Ministro Pirmininko pareigas perduoda Ministro Pirmininko Pavaiduotojui prof. Krėvei-Mickevičiui. E. Respub-

likos Prezidento p. tikiisi, kad Vyriausybė supras einamojo momento reikalavimus ir padės visas pastangas Lietuvos nepriklausomybei išlaikyti.

Ministro Pirmininko Pavaiduotojas pareiškia, kad jo vadovaujama Vyriausybė neapvils pasitikėjimo ir išlaikys, kas yra jos pareigoje tam, kas išlaikys Lietuvos Respublikos nepriklausomybę.

E. Respublikos Prezidentas
Ministras Pirmininkas

Ministras

generalinis
direktorius

to the Lithuanian Constitution (Article 72), he acts for the President of the Republic and hands over the functions of Prime Minister to Deputy Prime Minister Prof. Krėvė-Mickevičius. The Acting President of the Republic expresses a hope that the Government will realize the requirements of the present situation and will make every effort to retain Lithuania's independence.

The Deputy Prime Minister declares that under his leadership the Government will justify the confidence and do all in its power to retain the independence of the Lithuanian Republic.

PII, Collection of documents No. 409, pp. 2-3.

No. 39

Act of the President of the Republic Concerning the Appointment of Gedvilas Minister of Internal Affairs

June 19, 1940

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 97), and on representation of the Prime Minister (June 19, 1940, No. 682), I appoint Mečys Gedvilas Minister of Internal Affairs²¹.

Kaunas,
June 19, 1940

J. Paleckis
Acting President of the Republic,
Prime Minister
Prof. V. Krėvė-Mickevičius
Deputy Prime Minister

Vyriausybės žinios, June 22, 1940, No. 711.

No. 40

Announcement of the Handing over of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the New Minister Prof. Krėvė-Mickevičius

June 19, 1940

On Wednesday morning, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs Prof. Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius took over the Ministry from the former Minister of Foreign Affairs Juozas Urbšys and entered upon office. On that occasion, the new minister together with his predecessor made a round of all the Ministry departments and was presented to department heads.

The members of the Corps Diplomatique accredited in Kaunas are to visit the new Minister of Foreign Affairs on Friday, the day after tomorrow.

Lietuvos aidas, June 20, 1940.

No. 41

Speech of Minister of Defence and Commander of the Army, General Vitkauskas, During the Presentation of the Army and the Šauliai Association High Commands to President of the Republic Paleckis

June 20, 1940

Mr. President of the Republic, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces,

Higher commanders of the Army and chiefs of the Šauliai Association have gathered here, Mr. President of the Republic, to offer you in the name of all the soldiers and Šauliai their sincere congratulations, to wish you success in your highly responsible and important work and to assure you that all the soldiers and Šauliai shall do their duty in keeping with discipline and honesty, devoting all their energy to strengthen the security of their Motherland.

There has long been a feeling in the army that the management of our state affairs occasionally took inappropriate forms. On our part there have been attempts, within the limits of military discipline, to help in settling some of these affairs, but they have not always succeeded. The errors of the past enhance our determination to serve and defend our Motherland in the new circumstances.

We highly appreciate the might of the Red Army which, on the basis of the Treaty between the USSR and Lithuania of October 10, 1939, is to help Lithuania protect her freedom and independence. On this occasion I have the honour to note, Mr. President of the Republic, that the relations between our army and the Soviet army and its command have been and remain amiable and friendly. We shall do our utmost to make these relations as friendly, sincere, full of mutual confidence and respect in the future, because we are convinced that it will be for the benefit of the common security of the USSR and Lithuania.

Congratulating you, Mr. President of the Republic, and the Government headed by you, we pledge to honestly do all the duties imposed on us by you and the Lithuanian Government for the benefit and security of our free nation and independent state.

Lietuvos žinios, June 21, 1940.

No. 42

ELTA Dispatch on the Visits of the Heads of Foreign Diplomatic Missions in Kaunas to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Krėvė-Mickevičius

June 21, 1940

On June 21, between eleven and one o'clock, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Acting Prime Minister Prof. Krėvė-Mickevičius received the heads of diplomatic missions. Visits were made by the Apostolic Nuncio Monsignor Centoz, the German Minister Zechlin, the Latvian Minister

Seja, the French Minister Dulong, the USA Minister Norem, the Soviet Minister Pozdniakov, the Estonian Minister Latik, the Italian Minister Cassini, the British Minister Preston, the Swedish Chargé d'Affaires Westring, and the Danish Chargé d'Affaires Worsaae.

Lietuvos žinios, June 22, 1940.

No. 43

Telegram of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krėvė-Mickevičius, to the Lithuanian Missions Abroad Concerning the Events in Lithuania Between June 15 and 22, 1940

June 22, 1940

June 22, Kaunas. The new Government of Lithuania was formed on June 17 in accordance with the Constitution. The basic principles of the state system remain unchanged. The right to ownership is intact. The intended changes in the political system will be effected by legal acts. In the field of foreign policy, good relations will be maintained with all the states as before, whereas the cultivation of friendly relations with the Soviet Union will be regarded as a matter of special concern of the new Government. The increase in the number of Soviet garrisons does not prejudice the country's independence or economy, their sole purpose being to ensure security. The Mutual Assistance Treaty concluded in Moscow on October 10, 1939, remains the basis of the Lithuanian-Soviet relations. There have been no incidents in the country. Life in Lithuania continues normally.

Vienybė, June 25, 1940.

CHAPTER III

TURN TO SOCIALISM

On June 18, 1940, a declaration of the People's Government was published. It said that the People's Government had emerged upon the fall of the arbitrary regime, born of violence, and that the formation of the new Government opened the way for fresh social forces to join in raising the nation's welfare and promoting cultural progress. At home the Government set itself the task to transform the country's political system, to set free jailed anti-fascists, to dissolve the Seimas of the Nationalists, to abolish electoral qualifications introduced by them for the elections to self-government bodies; to implement equality of nationalities; to introduce broad reforms in the fields of health protection and education. As to foreign policy, the Government intended to maintain normal relations with all states. The relations between Lithuania and the USSR were given special consideration.

The declaration pointed out that the new Government was a government of those sections of the population who lived by their work and that it was not going to hamper the initiative of the popular masses seeking to transform the political system of the country. Thus it emphasized that henceforth the role of the working class and of all the working people in the life of the state was to increase.

In its appeal of June 18, the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party greeted the People's Government headed by Justas Paleckis, expressed its confidence in it and called on the working people to give it their support.

The People's Government carried out the changes in the political and economic life of the country by constitutional means in strict conformity with the laws which were valid before its formation. The previous structure of the state apparatus was left intact, only the content of its activities was being changed. The laws and the state apparatus were subjected to serve the interests of the people.

On the basis of relevant sections of the Constitution and the acts of the President of the Republic, urgent steps were being taken to reorganize the secret service and the police — tools of suppression in the hands of the former regime. Reactionary officials who had defended the interests of the exploiter classes and committed acts of violence against the working people were removed from key positions in the state apparatus. At the same time efforts were made to put working people in all the sections of the state apparatus and to enable them to participate in the country's political life.

On June 18, 104 political prisoners were released from the Kaunas convict prison, among them Antanas Snieckus, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party. On June 19 to 21 alone, over 400 revolutionary political prisoners were released from jails in Šauliai, Panevėžys, Marijampolė, Ukmerge, Vilnius and Raseiniai as well as from the Dimitravas and Pabradė concentration camps.

Released from the jails, the anti-fascist political prisoners were given appointments in the central government apparatus or were sent to work in the state bodies in the places where they had participated in underground activities. The press was giving a big coverage of the reorganization of the state apparatus, appointments of new ministers, deputy ministers, heads of departments and other officials, dwelling upon their progressive anti-fascist activities and the services to the working people.

These actions of the People's Government stirred up the political activity among the working people. Inspired by revolutionary enthusiasm and seeing that the People's

Government was acting in their interests, the workers and peasants began demanding to immediately rearrange the life in the country on new principles.

Workers' and employees' committees began to spring up. Their purpose was to defend the interests of the working class and to enhance its role in the country's political and economic life. The committees were to regulate relations between workers and factory owners, to supervise the implementation of the Government's directives by factories and enterprises, to safeguard their factories. Workers' and state control was introduced at major state enterprises and banks.

On June 26, 1940, the People's Militia was established. It set to guard state and public offices, industrial enterprises of particular importance and so forth. The recruiting of the militia was under control of the working class which through the People's Militia took over the preservation of public order.

The activity of trade unions — mass organizations of the working class — was expanded, the scope of activities of trade-union committees and their influence on the government bodies were enhanced.

State control organs drew into their activities the representatives of plant and factory workers' committees and trade unions.

In the countryside, the poor and middle peasants began to set up peasant committees. These were entrusted with the task of looking after the economic interests of the small and middle peasants, including control over the activities of local self-government bodies. On the recommendations of the committees, the debts of peasants to the state were either reduced or written off altogether, more favourable terms to obtain timber were provided, etc. All this enhanced the political activity of the peasants, strengthened their confidence in the Government's actions.

From July 3, 1940, reorganization of the old Lithuanian army was undertaken. The Law on the Reorganization of the Army was promulgated. The army was renamed into the Lithuanian People's Army.

Thus reactionaries and the bourgeoisie in general were deprived of the right to exercise social oppression, while the foundations of the new social order were being laid simultaneously.

* * *

On June 25, 1940, the People's Government, in accordance with Article 81 of the Constitution, decided to ask the President of the Republic to dissolve the reactionary Seimas and to appoint new elections. By the President's Act of June 27, the Seimas was dissolved. The elections to the new Seimas were discussed at the Government meeting on July 5. It was decided to make a Declaration to the people on the elections to the People's Seimas, to approve the Electoral Law and to appoint the Central Electoral Committee.

On July 6, 1940, these documents of the People's Government were made public and appeared in the press.

The new Electoral Law granted all citizens of Lithuania who had reached the age of twenty-one the right to vote. One Seimas deputy was to be elected for every 35,000 people. It was thus envisaged to elect 79 deputies. Lithuania was divided into 8 electoral districts: Kaunas, Vilnius, Alytus, Marijampolė, Ukmerge, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, and Telšiai.

Soon afterwards an electoral bloc — the Working People's Union of Lithuania — emerged. On July 6 it made public its platform, containing the electoral demands of workers, peasants, intelligentsia and other sections of the people.

During the election campaign the former regime came under extensive criticism, with agitation for a socialist Lithuania being carried on. The mass media, the activists of the Communist Party, the Young Communist League, the trade-unions, the People's Aid Union and all other organizations functioning then joined the campaign.

Candidates to the People's Seimas were nominated at the meetings of the working people by majority vote. The

nominated and registered candidates were discussed by collective bodies of the working people who then gave their mandates to the would-be Seimas deputies. The representatives of the bourgeoisie were not banned from taking part in the meetings of the working people and from nominating their own candidates. The working people, however, did not put forward such candidates to the People's Seimas. In general, the bourgeoisie came to the elections in full disarray.

During the election campaign a nation-wide movement for friendship and rapprochement with the Soviet Union was gaining strength. As early as June 18, the People's Government stressed that its first and foremost task was to maintain sincere and friendly relations with the Soviet Union. The electoral platform of the Working People's Union of Lithuania also said that all Lithuania's citizens and patriots, all the electors, irrespective of their social status, nationality or religion, were called to vote for the candidates who were resolved and able to fight consistently for friendship and alliance between the Republic of Lithuania and the Soviet Union. The election manifesto of the Working People's Union of Lithuania, addressed to the workers, peasants, soldiers and working intelligentsia and published in all the newspapers, including *Tiesa*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, said that "inviolable and closest possible friendship with the Soviet peoples and a firm alliance with the great Soviet Union make and are to make in future the main guiding principle of the policy pursued by Labour Lithuania. It is only on this friendship and on close relationship that the future of our native land depends." *

The editorial carried on the eve of the elections by the newspaper *Darbininkų žodis* elucidated the attitude of the working people towards the current political trend in Lithuania. It pointed out that "the working man who has come

* *Tiesa*, July 10, 1940; *Lietuvos žinios*, July 10, 1940; *Karių tiesa*, July 13, 1940, and others.

out from the basements and huts shall not stop half-way. Manifestations, demonstrations and meetings show that the working people are resolved to follow the way indicated to the proletariat by Marx and Lenin, the way chosen by the USSR." *

The election campaign ended on July 13. On July 14-15, 1,386,569 electors, i.e. 95.51 per cent of all who had the right to vote, came to the polling stations. Of these, 1,375,349, i.e. 99.19 per cent, voted for the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania.

Seventy-nine deputies were elected to the People's Seimas: twenty-two workers, twenty-five peasants, twenty-eight intellectuals, one artisan and three soldiers. Forty-nine deputies of the Seimas, i.e. 62.2 per cent of all its members, in the years of bourgeois rule had served prison sentences for anti-fascist revolutionary activities.

* * *

The first session of the People's Seimas was convened in Kaunas on July 21, 1940. It was opened by Justas Paleckis, Acting President of the Republic. In his speech he dwelt upon the history of the struggle of the working people for Soviet power in Lithuania and on the work accomplished by the People's Government. The Seimas approved of the Government's activities, expressed its confidence in it and authorized the Government to continue in office.

Lithuania's state system was the pivotal question on the agenda of the People's Seimas. In considering the question, the Seimas took into account the long struggle of Lithuania's working people for the socialist system, their will to create Lithuania in which state power would belong to the people themselves, without capitalists and exploiters.

After discussing the question of the state system, on July 21 the People's Seimas unanimously adopted the "Declaration on the State system". It proclaimed the intro-

* *Darbininkų žodis*, July 13, 1940.

duction of the Soviet system in Lithuania and stated that all power in the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic henceforth was vested in the working people of town and country, in Soviets elected by them. Thus the People's Seimas enacted the establishment of Soviet power in Lithuania.

At that time, preparations were under way in the West for an aggression against the USSR. Large German forces were massed on the Soviet-German border. With the capitulation of France, the Nazis increased the number of their armed forces in the border-land. Thirty-six divisions were moved there between mid-June and September in 1940.

The concentration of German armed forces against the Soviet Union represented a threat to Soviet Lithuania too. In their aggressive designs against the Soviet Union, the Nazis intended to seize Lithuania first of all. The threat on the part of Hitler Germany impelled Soviet Lithuania to lean on the powerful Soviet state for support, to unite her forces with those of the Soviet Union to safeguard the achievements of the working people.

There were other considerations, too, which conditioned the necessity of joining the USSR. In the first place, it was necessary to create the most favourable economic conditions for the construction of socialism in Lithuania. The experience of the Soviet Union had proved that the tasks of socialist construction could be successfully accomplished only by joint effort, by mutual assistance among peoples.

Taking all this into account, the People's Seimas discussed the question of Lithuania's entrance into the USSR and adopted unanimously the "Declaration on Lithuania's Entrance into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." The Declaration stressed that without the state's union of the Soviet republics, without gathering together their forces, it would be impossible to oppose the united forces of capitalists in either military or economic fields *.

* Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, p. 57,

On July 22 the People's Seimas discussed the nationalization of land. The Seimas declared the land to be the property of the state. The Declaration on the land question pointed out that the landless and poor peasants would be given land free of charge from the State Land-fund made up of the land obtained by cutting down the estates and large farms. The Seimas freed the peasants from the installment payments left from the times of the bourgeois land reform. In addition, the peasants were freed of arrears and fines imposed on them by administrative bodies of the former regime.

On July 23 the Seimas adopted a decision on the nationalization of large-scale industry. The nationalization of banks, large-scale industry, transport and trade aimed at putting an end to the predominance of the bourgeoisie in Lithuania's economy and at concentrating the country's economic life in the hands of Soviet power.

The adoption of the above declarations by the People's Seimas laid the economic foundations for the building of socialism in Lithuania. This also was one of the prerequisites for Lithuania's entrance into the USSR.

In conclusion the People's Seimas elected an Authorized Mission which was entrusted to deliver to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR the Declaration on the Entrance of Soviet Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

On August 3, 1940, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR at its seventh session discussed the question of Soviet Lithuania's admission into the USSR. It decided to fulfil the request of the People's Seimas and to accept the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic into the USSR as a Union Republic.

The great achievements scored by Soviet Lithuania, as a constituent Soviet republic, in the fields of economic, cultural and social development under socialism have substantiated the historic self-determination made in the summer of 1940.

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crowned by the shameful flight of the former president and his henchmen from their own people.

With the collapse of the regime, free vistas have opened up for new forces called upon to restore creative work in the fields both of everyday life and prosperity of the people and of cultural progress, involving the broadest sections of the population.

In the field of foreign policy, the new Government intends to maintain normal relations with all countries. The primary task of the Government will be to establish genuinely sincere and friendly relations with the Soviet Union to which Lithuania is closely allied on the basis of the Mutual Assistance Pact.

To ensure the general prosperity of the country, the new Government will make every effort to secure the full rights of the people, to achieve improvement in the cultural and material standards of the population.

Among the immediate tasks of the new Government will be the rearrangement of the political system which up to now was directed against the people's interests. With this aim in view, the Government will dissolve the present Seimas and abolish the qualifications for the elections to state and municipal organs, which were falsified by Skučas.

One of the first steps taken by the new Government was the release of political prisoners who had fought for the freedom and rights of the people and banning the privileged organizations and parties.

The Government will give serious attention to implementing the principle of national equality and to resolutely eliminating chauvinism among nationalities.

Far-reaching reforms will be carried out in the field of public health. To this end, a new Ministry of Health Protection has been set up.

The education of broad masses — a field sadly neglected up to now — will be given great consideration. In this work the Government expects wide public support.

The Government gives its complete approval to the attention and cordiality shown by the broad masses of

the Lithuanian people to the units of the friendly Red Army of the Soviet Union. In its turn, the Government will spare no effort in creating the best possible conditions for the Soviet troops stationed in our country and will render them every assistance.

Assuming its duties, the Government calls upon all citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, irrespective of their status, nationality or religion, to rally to work in common for the welfare of our dear Motherland.

Lietuvos aidas, June 19, 1940.

No. 2

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party Greeting the Formation of the New Government

June 18, 1940

We greet the Government of Prime Minister Paleckis!

The Soviet Union, thanks to which Lithuania escaped terrible war slaughter and which returned to Lithuania her ancient capital Vilnius, has now helped the Lithuanian people to get rid of the Smetona-Merkys-Skučas gang of criminals.

We greet the Government of Paleckis, who has pledged to sincerely observe the Mutual Assistance Pact with the USSR — a pillar of Lithuania's independence — and to restore the democratic rights to the people.

To ensure a sincere implementation of the Pact and a democratic rearrangement of the country the following measures should be taken:

The country and, first of all, the government apparatus shall be purged of spies, agents, provocateurs and villains.

The enemies of the people shall be put in jail!

Anti-state organizations shall be banned!

The property of the runaway reactionaries shall be confiscated!

Profiteering shall be resolutely curbed!

We hope that the new Government will legalize the trade unions and in general will not hinder workers and peasants from organizing, holding meetings and having their own press.

We expect the legalization of the Lithuanian Communist Party — the consistent fighter for Lithuania's independence and the cause of the working people.

In resolutely tackling these tasks, the new Government may assuredly rely upon the support of the broadest masses of the working people. . . .

PII PA, f. 1770, 1940, b. 1, l. 1^c.

No. 3

Order of the Minister of Justice to the Warden of the Kaunas Convict Prison on the Release of Sniečkus, Secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party

June 18, 1940

To the Warden of the Kaunas Convict Prison

I order you to release immediately from the Kaunas Convict Prison Antanas Sniečkus¹, a political prisoner.

June 18, 1940.

Pov. Pakarklis
Minister of Justice

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 19, l. 8.

No. 4

**Extract from the Act of President of the Republic No. 762
on the Release of Political Prisoners from the Kaunas
Convict Prison**

June 18, 1940

In accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania (Article 130), and on representation of the Minister of Justice of June 18, 1940, No. 762, I hereby quash prison sentences of the 104 political prisoners enumerated below....

J. Paleckis
Acting President of the Republic,
Prime Minister

P. Pakarklis
Minister of Justice

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 19, l. 9.

No. 5

**ELTA Dispatch on the Release of Political Prisoners from
the Kaunas Convict Prison**

June 18, 1940

The release of political prisoners from the Kaunas Convict Prison began at 5 o'clock on June 18. It lasted about two hours. One hundred and four political prisoners were released in small groups. A large crowd watched the scene. The political prisoners were met with flowers, tears, embraces. Some of these prisoners had spent ten and more years in jail. In an orderly and disciplined manner, the political prisoners went to the appointed places where they were fed, given better clothes and provided with lodgings for the night. Someone in the crowd tried to start a noisy demonstration in the streets. To this, the political prisoners themselves reacted immediately. One of them, perched on the shoulders of his fellow-prisoners, said that they had

pledged their word to maintain order in the street and promised to disperse quietly and orderly. He pointed out that such a demonstration could only serve the provocative aims of the enemies. These words were given a warm approval by the crowd. Thus the political prisoners themselves declared on the spot against disturbance of any kind.

Lietuvos žinios, June 20, 1940.

No. 6

Order of the Day to the Lithuanian Army Issued by Minister of Defence and Commander of the Army, General Vitkauskas, in Connection with the Downfall of the Dictatorial Regime and the Formation of the People's Government

June 18, 1940

The present-day world events are of historic importance for our nation and state.

Our Army shall continue to keep guard of the Motherland and firmly carry out the tasks entrusted by our Government both in defending the freedom of the country and preserving order at home as well as in friendly cooperation with the Army of the USSR.

I hereby order all the servicemen to firmly and diligently execute their duties.

I demand of all servicemen composure, discipline, performance of their work and sincere cooperation with the Soviet servicemen.

The present order of the day shall be made public and explicit to all servicemen.

Orders of the Day to the Army, 1940.

Order of the Minister of the Interior on Changes in the Staff of the Ministry

June 19, 1940

1. Pranas Barkauskas, Secretary General of the Ministry, is relieved of his duties from June 19, 1940.

2. Domas Stankūnas, head of the Press and Societies Department, is relieved of his duties from June 18, 1940.

3. From June 19, 1940, Antanas Sniečkus is taken into service and is appointed head of the State Security Department.

Gedvilas

Minister of the Interior

CVA, f. 1742, ap. 1, b. 19, l. 11.

Kovotojų dėl liaudies teisių išlaisvinimo aktas

Kaunas VI 19 Elta. Einačio
Respublikos Prezidento pareigas
ir Vyriausybės

P A R E I S K I M A S

Einąs Lietuvos Respublikos
Prezidento pareigas ir Vyriausy-
bės laikome savo pirmąją pareigą
atitaisyti buvusį neteisingumą,
taikyti Lietuviai tautai. Pirmoje
eilėje siekiamie išlaisvinti netei-
singai nuteistuosius ar adminis-
tracinių būdu nubaistuosius po-
litinius kalinius.

Remiamasis Lietuvos Respub-
likos Konstitucijos 130 straips-
niu, Einąs Respublikos Presiden-
to pareigas, Teisingumo Ministe-
riui pasiūlius, pasirašiau aktą,
kurio eile asmenų, laikytų kalė-

jime, jų tarpe ir pasmerktų kalė-
ti iki gyvos galvos, jau išleista į
laisvę.

Tas darbas bus tęsiamas ir bus
užbaigtas artimiausiomis dienom-
is.

Visiems išlaisvintiems Vyriaus-
sybės sudarys visas reikalingas
sąlygas tam, kad jie galėtų ra-
miai gyventi ir dirbti mūsų Tėvy-
nės ir lietuvių tautos labui.

Kaunas, 1940. VI 19 d.

(pas) A. Paleckis

E. Respublikos Prezidento p.

(pas) V. Krėvė - Mickevičius

E. Ministro Pirmininko p.

Ministro Pirmininko

Pavadootojas

No. 8

Extract from the Statement of Acting President of the Republic, Paleckis, and Acting Prime Minister, Krėvė-Mickevičius, Concerning the Release of Anti-fascist Political Prisoners

June 19, 1940

In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic (Article 130), the Acting President, on representation of the Minister of Justice, signed an Act by which a number of convicts, including those sentenced to life imprisonment, have been released.

This work will be continued and will be completed in a few days.

For all those released the Government will create all necessary conditions for normal life and work for the good of our Motherland and the Lithuanian people.

Kaunas, June 19, 1940

Lietuvos aidas, June 20, 1940.

No. 9

Resolution Adopted at a Public Meeting Held in Kaunas in Honour of the Released Anti-fascist Political Prisoners

June 19, 1940

Today the progressive Lithuanian public, while giving honour to the political prisoners freed from Smetona's jails — the staunchest fighters for the freedom of the people — expresses its gratitude to the new Government, its great joy and firm conviction that the new Lithuanian Government is a genuine People's Government which by its very first step has satisfied the most ardent aspirations of the long-suffering people and has proclaimed an amnesty.

The progressive-minded Lithuanian public is convinced that this Government is a true defender of Lithuania's

independence, a guardian of the people's rights and interests, a sincere supporter of the peaceful policy of the Soviet Union, and that by this step it has launched the great endeavour of securing the freedom of the people, raising its well-being and strengthening amiable relations with our great friend — the Soviet Union.

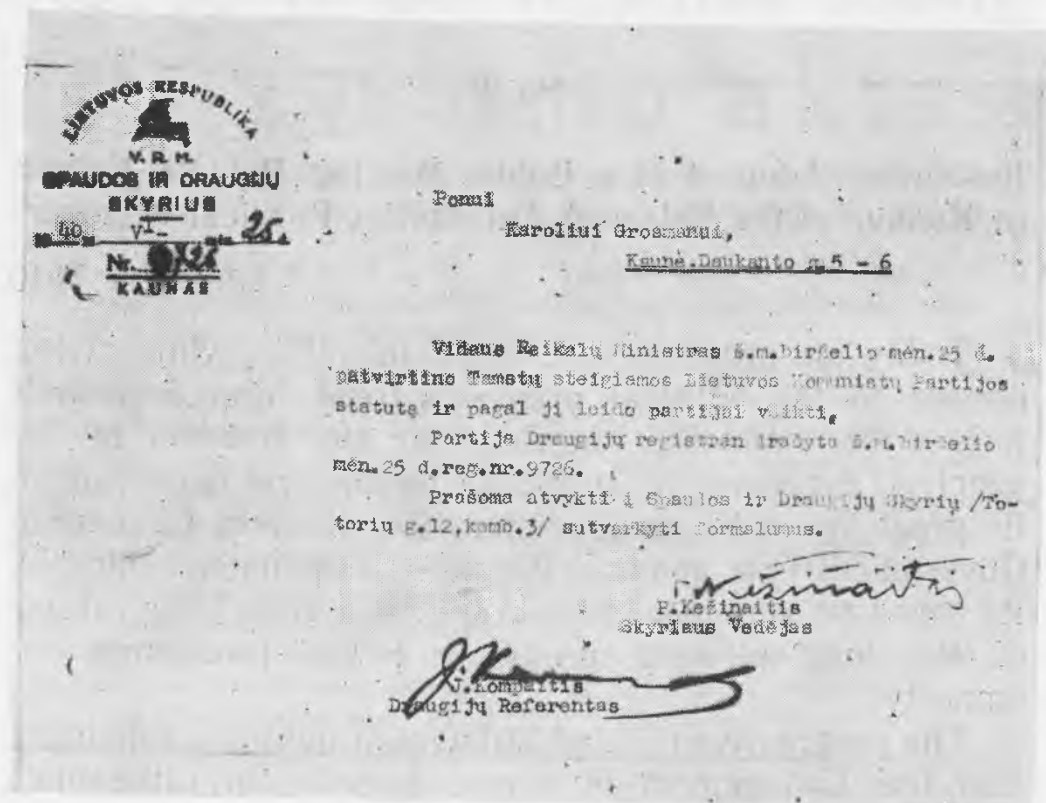
Lietuvos žinios, June 20, 1940.

No. 10

ELTA Dispatch on the Closing Down of the Nationalist Union — the Ruling Party of the Former Regime

June 19, 1940

On June 19, the Minister of the Interior, having considered the case of the Lithuanian Nationalist Union, established that under existing conditions further activities of the Union are incompatible with the interests of the security of the state and, therefore, in accordance with



Article 48 of the Charter of Societies, has resolved to close down the Lithuanian Nationalist Union with all its branches.

Lietuvos žinios, June 20, 1940.

No. 11

Notice Given by the Press and Societies Department of the Ministry of the Interior to the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party of the Official Legalization of the Lithuanian Communist Party

June 25, 1940

The Minister of the Interior has approved on June 25 the Rules of the Lithuanian Communist Party and permitted the party to act in accordance with the above rules....

PII PA, f. 1771, ap. 11, b. 1. 1. 1.



No. 12

**Notice Given by the Minister of the Interior Concerning
the Publication of the Daily *Tiesa***

June 26, 1940

In accordance with Article 19 of the Press Law (*Vyriausybės žinios*, No. 510, line 3538), I hereby permit the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to publish in Kaunas a daily in Lithuanian under the title of *Tiesa* for the purpose of public information.

Kaunas, June 26, 1940.

PII PA, f. 1771, ap. 13, b. 20, l. 21.

No. 13

**Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the
Lithuanian Communist Party in Connection with the Le-
galization of the Lithuanian Communist Party**

June 26, 1940

Comrades! From its very foundation the Lithuanian Communist Party has tirelessly fought for the cause of the working people. The Lithuanian Communist Party has always been the only party which did not look after the interests of a mere handful, but after the interests of workers, peasants and of the working people in general. The Christian Democratic, the Populist and the Social Democratic Parties have never defended the interests of the broad masses. There has never been and there is not a single party in Lithuania, except the Communist Party, that would not befool and betray the people.

It was only the Communist Party who took the plight of the workers and peasants to heart, it was only the Communists who unwearyingly fought for the freedom of the working people and our country. It is because the highest aim of the Lithuanian Communist Party is the

well-being of the masses that it has earned bitter hatred of the bourgeoisie which had no scruples about the means to fight it.

For nearly twenty-two years the Lithuanian Communist Party was cruelly persecuted, its members being killed and maltreated in jails and concentration camps, going through terrible privations in exile. For twenty-two years the Lithuanian Communist Party was compelled to carry out its activities in deep underground.

The usurpers of the people's rights have tried to silence the voice of the Communist Party not only by batons and bullets, by tear-gas and harsh sentences, but also by slander, provocations and deceit.

However, the plutocrats have failed, and could not but fail, in silencing the voice of the Communist Party. They have failed because every paper, every leaflet, every speech of the Communists reiterated the working man's thoughts and desires, and guided him in the struggle against the exploiters, for a free and happy life. The broad masses of the working people were devouring every word of the Communist Party because it is the only party which stands in the first ranks of the struggle for freedom.

Comrades! We have been called foreign agents, lies have been spread that the workers refuse to follow the Communists. These are hostile slanders! The Communist Party has always stood by the workers and the workers by the Communist Party. The demonstration that took place the day before yesterday showed not only the enemies of the Lithuanian people, but also the blood-suckers of the world that the working people supported their party, that the slogans of the Communist Party were the slogans of the working people.

And the working people will not be mistaken. The previous heroic struggle waged by the Communist Party is a pledge that the Communist Party will not stop half-way and, under the leadership of the Communist International, will lead the Lithuanian people to final victory.

Let the world of exploiters and enslavers know that the communist ideas, the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism are invincible. . . .

PII PA, f. 1770, 1940, b. 1, l. 1.

No. 14

Order of the Day to the Lithuanian Army Issued by General Vitkauskas, Minister of Defence and Commander of the Army

June 28, 1940

Additional units of the friendly Army of the USSR have entered the territory of Lithuania with the aim of enhancing the security of both our countries and creating better conditions for the implementation of the Mutual Assistance Treaty.

For the sake of common interests, closer spiritual ties and mutual understanding, and as a guarantee of implementing mutual assistance, the old political system had to be changed by a new one, definitely friendly and sincere towards our great Ally — the Soviet Union. The People's Government has been formed which in the spirit (within the limits) of the Mutual Assistance Treaty is now tackling this task. Naturally, such a sudden and radical change in the internal life could raise you a question — what is to become of our Army? On the authority of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces — the President of the Republic — I declare that our Army shall remain as it was: in case of danger it will defend Lithuania's freedom and independence, however, no longer alone, but together with the friendly Army of the USSR for our security is partly the security of the Soviet Union.

Hence, our relations with the Army of the USSR must be sincere and comradely. Distrust, doubts and incorrect

behaviour in relations with the Russian servicemen are out of place.

Lithuania is a country of the working people. The new People's Government, working energetically and intensely, is creating a new state system, is striving for a brighter tomorrow for the working people. The Army must not stand aside from this work; moreover, in common with the Government, it must render all possible help, contribute by every possible means to the brighter future of the working people, for our Army itself is made up of the working people.

So that the Army might be rapidly drawn into new creative work, keeping pace with the new life and working more efficiently, new creative forces, firmly resolved to work together with the new Government and to make sacrifices for the better future of Lithuania, are being drawn into this work.

While carrying out the reorganization of the Army, I emphasize that the rules of discipline and the Army Regulations must be strictly observed everywhere and in everything. All that is being done, is done by the Government itself after careful consideration and planning. Hence, everybody is requested to work calmly and efficiently.

In the rapidly changing circumstances it may often be difficult to orient oneself and to understand well the present situation. Therefore, I hereby order all the commanders and chiefs to be as close as possible to their subordinates, to intermingle with them freely, trying to understand their needs and explain them questions and obscurities that may arise.

The present order of the day is to be read and explained to all Army units.

Orders of the Day to the Army, 1940,

No. 15

**Resolution Adopted at the Meeting of the Working People
at Marijampolė**

June 29, 1940

1. To take away the land with live and dead stock from the landlords and to make it all over to the landless and poor peasants.

2. To confiscate immediately the property of the run-away enemies of the people.

3. To forbid evictions from flats, to reduce rents to a minimum.

4. To democratize the sick-benefit societies, to improve and make more accessible medical aid, especially for workers in lower-income range, to free the workers from payments to the sick-benefit societies.

5. To eliminate syndicates as exploiters of the working people.

6. To abolish income tax for low-paid workers.

7. To revise the Labour Hire Law in order to abolish various "labour direction" offices and other clauses inimical to the working people.

8. To provide the unemployed with work.

9. To introduce immediately the eight-hour working day, and

10. To punish slanderers, profiteers and agents provocateurs.

Lietuvos žinios, July 2, 1940.

No. 16

**Resolution Adopted at the Meeting of the Working People
at Telšiai**

June 30, 1940

We, workers and peasants of the town and environs of Telšiai, some ten thousand in number, having gathered on June 30 for a public meeting on the ground of the High

School, rejoice at getting rid of the regime of violence set up by Smetona and his accomplices which has lasted fourteen years². Throughout these 14 years the working people were cruelly persecuted, tortured and left to rot in jails only because they wanted to be free and to make their native country a better and happier one.

Today, when the chains of slavery are broken for good, when Smetona, the former "Leader of the Nation", and his accomplices have ignominiously fled abroad in fear of responsibility for their deeds, all the working people are breathing freely.

We, workers and peasants of the town of Telšiai and its environs, support unconditionally the People's Government and all its measures aimed against the enemies of the people. We devote all our strength to making our Motherland a better and happier place to live in.

We demand from our Government:

1. To take all measures to create in shortest time possible a socialist Soviet Lithuania, as the final goal of our struggle.

2. To purge the state apparatus of all Smetona's accomplices and people's enemies.

3. To confiscate the property of the runaway traitors and use it for the benefit of the people.

4. To separate the church from the state.

5. To make the land of big estates over to those who work it.

6. The state shall take over all large enterprises, factories and banks.

7. To provide with work all persons, able and willing to work.

8. To provide for the working people in illness and old age.

9. To fight all manifestations of national enmity from whatever side they might appear.

Lietuvos žinios, July 4, 1940.

Instruction Issued by the Head of the Labour Protection Department of the Ministry of Labour to All Labour Inspectors

June 28, 1940

The newly established Ministry of Labour begins its work officially from July 1 of this year. The regional labour inspections are to be put under the authority of the Labour Protection Department. From July 1 onwards, apply in all matters to the Labour Protection Department of the Ministry of Labour.

Temporarily the premises of the Ministry will be in the building of the Ministry of the Interior.

While performing their functions in future, the labour inspectors will be asked to be guided by the spirit pervading the work of the present People's Government. All the sound demands of the workers which at present are reasonable both from the legal and economic points of view should be satisfied. The People's Government will give special attention to the interests of the working people and will take steps through the Ministry of Labour to improve their socio-economic position and to satisfy their demands. Hence, in the cases when the demands of workers cannot be met for the time being from the legal point of view, efforts should be made to reassure them and ask them to wait with these demands until the introduction of new legislation which is now being amended and will be promulgated in the near future.

To the knowledge of the Ministry, in certain localities the workers, especially those employed on estates, have begun either dividing property among themselves or running enterprises on their own account. In these cases the inspectors should proceed speedily to the place of incident and, acting on behalf of the Ministry of Labour, take steps to amicably settle the incident on the spot. If the incident cannot be amicably settled, the Department should be informed without delay.

In exceptional circumstances, when the workers cannot be dissuaded from dividing property, the inspectors themselves should show initiative in setting up the workers' council which would then take over the estate with all its stock.

In general, labour inspectors are presently asked to watch attentively the current events, show initiative of their own to prevent interference in the normal work of enterprises. In urgent cases consult the Department.

PII PA, f. 1771, ap. 1771-19, b. 24, l. 16.

No. 18

Act of the Acting President of the Republic on the Reorganization of the Lithuanian Army

July 3, 1940

In accordance with Article 110 of the Constitution of Lithuania, the Acting President of the Republic promulgates hereby the following law on the reorganization of the Lithuanian Army.

1. The Lithuanian Army shall be thoroughly reorganized. Henceforth it is renamed into "The People's Army of Lithuania".

2. The institution of political instructors is introduced in the Army.

3. A Propaganda Department is set up in the Army.

4. The servicemen are allowed to take part in political activities off duty.

5. All laws and appertaining regulations at variance with the present law are hereby abrogated.

6. The present Law comes into effect from July 2, 1940.

Kaunas, July 3, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, July 4, 1940, No. 714.

Decisions of the People's Government Concerning the Elections to the Seimas

July 5, 1940

I. The Government Declaration to the nation and the date of the elections to the People's Seimas

On representation of the Minister of Justice, the Council of Ministers decides to adopt the Government Declaration to the nation on the issue of the elections to the People's Seimas and the date thereof.

II. The Draft Electoral Law

The Council of Ministers decides to approve the Draft Law on the elections to the People's Seimas in the wording submitted by the Minister of Justice.

III. On the appointment of the Electoral Committee

On the proposal of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers decides to appoint the Electoral Committee for the elections to the People's Seimas as follows:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Chairman | Vladas Niunka |
| Deputy Chairman | Kęstutis Domaševičius |
| members: | Andrius Bulota, Valerija Narvidaitė, Jonas Kvietkauskas |

PII, Collection of Documents No. 409, p. 14.

Declaration of the People's Government on the Elections to the Seimas

July 6, 1940

To the People of Lithuania

The People's Government, formed after the downfall of the Smetona regime, in the short time of its existence has already carried out a number of urgent measures aimed at animating the political life in the country and breaking the fetters by which the working people of Lithuania were chained. Now the Government is about to tackle a task of no lesser importance — further reorganization of the life in all fields. However, before setting about this work, the People's Government intends to give to the nation an account of what it has accomplished. After this the Government wants to hear of the will and wishes of the people so that, leaning on the initiative and support of the people, it might continue the work towards creating a peaceful and happy life in our Motherland.

The plutocratic Nationalist government and its dictatorial regime, which had served the interests of a narrow clique, had misgivings of the people's representation. For over ten years, therefore, it refused to call the Seimas³ and later made an electoral law which fully excluded all the clauses giving the slightest hint at democratism or vesting the Seimas with any rights.

The People's Government deems it necessary to work out the Electoral Law in such a way that it would bring the Seimas nearer to the people, making it a really democratic institution, expressing the will of the working people.

Led by its determination and unhesitating desire to conduct the affairs of state in close cooperation with the people, the Government hereby decides:

1. To promulgate the new Electoral Law.
2. To announce the elections to the new People's Seimas.

3. To set up to Supreme Electoral Committee.

4. Considering the urgency of the tasks standing before the state, to hold the elections to the People's Seimas on July 14, 1940.

Kaunas, July 6, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, July 6, 1940, No. 715.

No. 21

Excerpts from the Electoral Law

July 6, 1940

In accordance with Article 110 of the Constitution of Lithuania, the Acting President of the Republic promulgates the following People's Seimas Electoral Law.

The People's Seimas Electoral Law

I. General Principles

All citizens of Lithuania who have reached the age of 21 years have the right to vote in the election of people's representatives.

Disfranchised are:

1. Persons deprived of rights, except those who were deprived on account of political crimes.

2. Persons sentenced for theft, swindling, embezzlement, purchase or concealment of stolen goods, bribery and other criminal deeds injuring human dignity, unless five years have elapsed from the date of sentence.

3. Persons under investigation suspected of crimes entailing deprivation of rights or of crimes indicated in clause 2.

4. Persons under guardianship.

5. Persons committed to custody.

Eligible for election to the People's Seimas is every citizen of Lithuania who has reached the age of 21 years.

Disfranchised persons cannot be elected.

One people's representative is elected for every 35,000 people.

People's representatives are elected within electoral districts. The electoral districts are defined in the Appendix to the present Law.

The number of people's representatives to be elected in each electoral district is determined and made public by the Supreme Electoral Committee in the *Vyriausybės žinios*....

III. Lists of Candidates

Candidates for the people's representatives are nominated on the basis of districts.

A town with a population of over 35,000 equals a district.

The number of candidates for people's representatives corresponds to the number of deputies to be elected in the given district.

Candidates to people's representatives are nominated at the working people's meetings convened by respective district election commissions.

The one who has received a majority of votes is declared a candidate to the people's representative.

After the vote, the chairman announces the results and the name of the candidate nominated for the people's representative and closes the meeting.

The minutes are drawn up and signed by the chairman of the meeting. Appended to them are the written consents of candidates to people's representatives to run in the election and the results of voting.

All the documents are sent without delay to the district election commission.

The district commissions submit the lists of nominated candidates to the Central Electoral Committee for approval. Provided the Central Electoral Committee invalidates the registration of a candidate for people's representative, the meeting of the district working people, convened within two days after the notice given by the Central Electoral Committee, nominates a new candidate instead....

Vyriausybės žinios, July 6, 1940, No. 715.

Extract from the Electoral Platform of the Working People's Union of Lithuania

July 6, 1940

... Citizens of free Lithuania!

On the historic day of July 14 we shall go to the polling stations in united and serried ranks to elect honest representatives, capable of expressing the true will and aspirations of the people, strengthening and widening the genuine friendship with the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics — the only guarantor of our country's prosperity and free development.

We, representatives of workers' trade-unions, factory and workshop committees, peasants, representatives of working intelligentsia, writers, artists, sports organizations, women of free Lithuania, Lithuania's working youth, and also the Lithuanian Communist Party, fully realizing the importance of the tasks in the election campaign to the People's Seimas, have united into a single Union of Working Lithuania⁴ in an effort to elect to the Seimas the best and the most devoted sons of the people, capable of defending and implementing the true aspirations of the people.

We call on all honest citizens and patriots of Lithuania, on all electors, irrespective of their status, nationality and religion, to cast their vote for those candidates only who are determined and capable of consistently and resolutely fighting for the demands set forth by our platform which expresses the aspirations of the working people of Lithuania.

A. In the field of foreign policy

Friendship between the peoples of the Republic of Lithuania and the Soviet Union, a firm and unbreakable alliance between the Republic of Lithuania and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

B. In the field of home policy

1. To grant the working peasants remission of taxes and debts, to cancel fines imposed on them.

2. To grant the farms of poor and small peasants remission of bank loans.

3. To give all-round state aid to landless and poor peasants and provide them with land.

4. To improve the position of factory and office workers, to raise their wages and salaries and to improve their working conditions.

5. To establish social insurance of the working people against illness and accidents at the expense of employers or the state.

6. To provide maintenance of workers and women workers in old age and of labour invalids at state expense.

7. In the field of the national health service — to expand the network of hospitals, sanatoriums, dispensaries, outpatient departments.

8. All-round development of national culture, art, science and education.

9. Complete equality of nations and freedom of religion.

10. Further democratization of the People's Army.

11. Freedom of speech, the press, assembly and unions in defence of the interests of the working people.

12. Introduction of civil marriage and registry.

13. Inviolability of the person and property.

14. To stop the payment of subsidies and pensions to the rich and to the enemies of the people, to eliminate extra bonuses to functionaries, to lower the excessive salaries of government officials.

15. To lower rents and secure the rights of poor tenants.

16. To combat profiteering.

Citizens of Free Lithuania!

We call on you to vote for the demands contained in the platform of the Working People's Union of Lithuania, as only the implementation of these demands will restore the Lithuanian people to its happiness and its rights.

[The page contains numerous handwritten signatures and names, mostly illegible due to cursive script.]

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Not a single vote for the people who cannot and would not fight consistently and with revolutionary determination for the platform of the Working People's Union of Lithuania....

Tiesa, July 6, 1940.

No. 23

Extract from the Appeal of the Working People's Union of Lithuania to Workers, Peasants, Servicemen and Working Intelligentsia on the Occasion of the Elections to the People's Seimas

....

July 9, 1940

... 17. Peasants! The unbearable burden of debts and interests to the state treasury and to all kinds of usurers has been lying heavy on you. The time is coming at last when you will be able to breathe freely. The candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania will achieve in the Seimas a complete remission of these debts for toiling peasants.

18. Peasants! The exploitation you have suffered has come to an end! Your sleepless nights and anxieties about your last cow and even the farm being sold in a day or two to pay off the debts will end forever. These will be remitted forthwith by the new People's Seimas. To achieve this, vote for the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania.

19. Farm labourers, peasants! Do not allow the landowners to destroy property, poison or slaughter cattle, damage crops, grain and stock, acquired by your toil and sweat. Prevent them from doing this and help the organs of the people's power.

20. Peasants! Do not allow destruction and felling of forests; Lithuania's forests — belonging to the state or to private estates — is your property. Preserve the wealth of the forests!

21. Workers! Your wages must be and shall be raised without delay. The candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania will demand this increase in the Seimas and will secure it. Town workers and farm hands, all vote on July 14 for the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania! Be active agitators for this list!

22. In Labour Lithuania every working man — factory worker or farm hand — will be properly insured against accidents and old age. This will be the care of the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania, elected by you to the Seimas.

23. Unemployment is a shameful inheritance left to us by the regime of Smetona. In the new Lithuania, the foundations of which you yourselves are laying by electing to the Seimas the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania, there will not be, could not be and shall not be unemployed people without livelihood and shelter. This will be effected by ways and means indicated by the People's Seimas.

24. Today you are still unemployed. Only yesterday you were in despair while your families were deploring their lot. The new Labour Lithuania will secure for you all work and bread. Fully confiding in the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania, on July 14 go one and all to the polls.

25. The toilers of towns and villages will henceforth make one close, friendly, enlightened and progressive family of the working people of Lithuania. It is they who will be the masters in their own land.

26. Until now all the creations of human genius were accessible but to the select few, whereas the ordinary people were totally excluded from light and learning. In Labour Lithuania, education, culture and art will serve the people and their interests. Let us all join in this historic task, let us give all of our strength and energy to the people, to the building of a new and bright life. . . .

PII PA, f. 1770, 1940, b. 3, l. 21.

No. 24

Announcement of the Supreme Electoral Committee on the Seimas Election Returns

July 17, 1940

In accordance with Article 44 of the People's Seimas Electoral Law (*Vyriausybės žinios*, No. 715, line 5634), the Supreme Electoral Committee, considering the protocols sent in by all the Districts Electoral Commissions, has established:

1. During the elections to the People's Seimas, held on July 14-15, 1940, in accordance with Articles 32 to 35 of the People's Seimas Electoral Law, 1,386,569 electors cast 1,386,599 votes, which amounts to 95.51 per cent of the electors according to Article 1 of the above law.

2. 1,375,349 electors (99.19 per cent) voted for the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania.

3. No complaints of voting irregularities have been made.

4. The elections being in accordance with law, the Supreme Electoral Committee, acting on the basis of Article 44 of the People's Seimas Electoral Law, has decided to publish in the *Vyriausybės žinios* the list of the deputies elected to the People's Seimas.

Vyriausybės žinios, July 17, 1940, No. 717.

No. 25

Act of the President of the Republic on the Convocation of the First Session of the People's Seimas

July 18, 1940

In accordance with Article 47 of the People's Seimas Electoral Law, I hereby convene the first session of the People's Seimas at 12 o'clock on July 21, 1940, in Kaunas at the State Theatre.

Kaunas, July 18, 1940

Vyriausybės žinios, July 20, 1940, No. 718.

**Extract from the Resolution Adopted at the Meeting of
Vilnius Working People, Greeting the First Session of the
People's Seimas and Demanding Political and Economic
Reforms in Lithuania**

July 21, 1940

We, participants of the mass demonstration and meeting, held in Vilnius in Lukiškių Square, on July 21, 1940, including the representatives of workers, working intelligentsia and peasants from Vilnius and the Vilnius Region, congratulate the People's Seimas on the beginning of its work, hailing the first truly representative state body in the history of Lithuania. The people of Lithuania expresses its full confidence in the Seimas.

We hope that the Seimas will tackle without delay all our demands. We request that our representatives should immediately decide:

1. To pull Lithuania out of the rotten anarchic capitalist system and to direct her onto the path of planned socialist development.

2. To nationalize banks and large enterprises in order to deprive the capitalists of key positions in our national economy and transfer them to the people.

3. To alienate land of private estates and make it over to those who work it — landless and poor peasants.

4. To introduce in Lithuania the Constitution of the USSR which would vest power and rights in the working people and ensure full economic, social and cultural prosperity and a brotherhood among nations.

5. To apply to the Soviet Union and request to accept Lithuania as a Union Republic into the free family of the Soviet Socialist Republics⁵. . . .

Darbo Lietuva, July 23, 1940.

Extract from the Speech of Acting President of the Republic, Paleckis, at the First Session of the People's Seimas

July 21, 1940

People's Representatives of liberated Lithuania, Citizens, Comrades! On behalf of the first People's Government of Lithuania, I greet you, the deputies of the first People's Seimas, the true representatives of the working people of free Lithuania. To the place where twenty years ago the representatives of bourgeoisie of various hues had gathered to lay the foundations of a would-be democratic Lithuania, which were destined to collapse soon, you have come to lay the foundations of a new Lithuania of working people. The struggle for this future new Lithuania has been long and arduous. It goes back to the times when the Lithuanian books were smuggled across the border, to the 1905 Revolution, including all the fights waged by the people in bourgeois Lithuania from the 1918-1920 civil war between the two Lithuanias up to the present time — the downfall of Smetona's regime. This struggle of the Lithuanian people is linked with the international liberation struggle of the proletariat in the vanguard of which there had always been the proletariat of Russia, shoulder to shoulder with whom the proletariat of Lithuania fought in 1905, in the February and October revolutions of 1917 and also at the various fronts of the civil war in Russia. . . . All these struggles and sacrifices made to realize the people's aspirations for freedom had been and would have long remained fruitless, had it not been for the fraternal help rendered to us by the brotherly and friendly peoples of the great Soviet Union, brought to us by the Red Army — liberator of the peoples. . . .

I would like to dwell on the situation which we have lived through so that we could better appraise the present situation and the prospects before us. Looking back into

the past, to the period of our national renaissance, we see a clear-cut and constant struggle between the two Lithuanias — between the Lithuania of the landlords and the Lithuania of peasant serfs, between the Lithuania of reactionary clericals and the Lithuania of progressive free-thinkers, between the bourgeois and the proletarian Lithuania. All the stages of the nation's history are marked by the struggle between these two Lithuanias. Looking back at the evolution of this struggle, we can see an interesting phenomenon. At the time of the 1905 Revolution, the clerical reactionary Lithuania proclaimed loyalty to the Tsar and spoke of the Lithuanians as "lodgers in the flat of tsarist Russia", who ought to keep quiet and obedient to the Tsar and his government. . . . During the 1917 Revolution, at the Lithuanian Seimas in Petersburg the reactionary clericals made a sudden change-over to "progress" — they demanded a completely independent Lithuania — while the progressives maintained that "it would be better for Lithuania to be part of a free federative and mighty Russia than a would-be independant Persia trampled upon by invaders."

Why did then the reactionaries suddenly make a somersault, turning from obedient and loyal adherents of tsarist Russia into independence seekers? Obviously, it happened so because the reactionaries feared the revolutionary movement of the people which would have radically eliminated clericalism that had so long enslaved the spirit of our people and would have replaced the country's economic system by one eradicating exploitation of the people and the bourgeois capitalist system. It was not in consideration of the people's well-being that the clericals and reactionaries defended the idea of independence, but purely in consideration of their own skin and of their class interests. . . .

Bourgeois Lithuania emerged as a self-styled independent democratic republic. On closer examination, however, it becomes clear that this independence was rather imaginary, while democracy remained but a dream. In reality,

the independent Lithuania was merely a pawn, a toy in the hands of imperialist powers. . . .

Supported by various foreign mercenaries, armed by the Entente powers and deceived by their own politicians, the Lithuanian Army units fought against their brothers — the Red Army men of Socialist Soviet Lithuania. The Army of bourgeois Lithuania was under the illusion that it was fighting for an independent Lithuania, for freedom and democracy. In reality, however, it fought for the aims of the Entente powers, making merely a link in the policy of intervention, it fought for domestic money-bags and exploiters. What gratitude the Entente powers showed Lithuania can be seen from the example of Vilnius. When in April 1919 the Poles seized Vilnius, striking Socialist Soviet Lithuania a blow, the Entente powers washed their hands and set about fixing a demarcation line between the Lithuanians and the Poles who were striving to penetrate deeper into Lithuania's territory. In 1920 Vilnius was for the first time liberated by Soviet Russia from the Poles and returned to Lithuania, but soon the city was again seized by Żeligowski.⁶ We all remember the humiliation Lithuania went through in her efforts to redress this act of violence. She protested, importuned the League of Nations, her representatives even banged the table with their fists at the League of Nations but everything — anger, appeals and speeches lasting several hours — was of no avail. The only thing Lithuania got from the League of Nations was a platonic assurance that she, as a token of protest, had a right not to enter into diplomatic relations with Poland. Whereas the Conference of Ambassadors of the Allied Powers, which at the time was actually settling European affairs, without further ceremony attributed the Vilnius Region to Poland.

The attitude of the Pope towards Lithuania was no better. Despite Lithuania's Catholicity and piety, he had also brutally chosen the path of political realities and had separated Vilnius from the Province of Lithuania, thus attributing it to Poland. And if today the Vatican is possibly frowning upon the denunciation of the Concordat, let it re-

collect the blessing given to the violence to which the Lithuanian people could now give a proper answer, let also it recollect that even the Catholic Lithuanian people were so vexed then that they egged the nuncio and made him flee from Lithuania.

It is well known that in the Lithuanian-Polish conflict over Vilnius only the Soviet Union openly and clearly stood on the side of Lithuania and had never recognized the Vilnius Region to be part of Poland. It was only due to this definite attitude of the USSR not to allow to dispose of Lithuania that the Polish designs to annex Lithuania were more than once frustrated. . . .

Finally, we hardly need to recall the humiliation and shame caused by the 1938 ultimatum⁷ of the imperialist Poland, an ultimatum which all of us felt so painfully and which displayed vividly the illusiveness of bourgeois independence.

A Russian proverb says: "The peasant does not cross himself unless the thunder strikes". Many a time did the heavens of our country thunder, but the rulers of Lithuania did not cross themselves, did not draw conclusions but sought rescue in various manoeuvres. Though in words and in rare articles the former governments allegedly attempted to stress the friendship between Lithuania and the USSR, in reality, however, they had never sincerely sought it and, instead of creating conditions for it, they even obstructed it in every way possible. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union showed Lithuania nothing but fraternal friendship and genuine support. It should be noted and kept in mind that the USSR has never taken from Lithuania anything, but has been giving and rendering help instead. Indeed, only thanks to the October Revolution of 1917, which brought freedom to the nations, was Lithuania able to make use of the right of peoples to self-determination and to build an independent life. By the Treaty of Peace the USSR had rendered Lithuania considerable material aid. As to Vilnius, Lithuania has regained it from the Soviet Union not for the first time. For all this, however, the former Lithuanian governments paid back in

black ingratitude. From the very first day we saw that the Government of Smetona had signed the Treaty on the Transfer of Vilnius and Lithuanian-Soviet Mutual Assistance of October 10, 1939, bearing malice against it and by no means intending to implement it in accordance with its spirit. The developments preceding the June events have disclosed that dark and provocative designs were hatched against the friendly garrisons of the Soviet Army stationed in Lithuania. However, a vigilant eye saw and a firm hand foiled the schemes disastrous for our country and for our relations with the Soviet Union. . . .

What can be said about the home policy in bourgeois Lithuania? And not only in the time of Smetona but earlier too. Said the people's authoress Žemaitė in 1921: "I came to Lithuania but have not found her". In bitter satirical verses, Maironis condemned the villainies reigning in Lithuania, while our new literature with few exceptions is an act of indictment brought against that Lithuania. And deservedly so: the ideologists of bourgeois Lithuania had clearly said that "there won't be any art, science and culture until we have our own bourgeoisie." Hence, the making of bourgeoisie was going on at full speed. There was much ranting and shouting about self-denial, idealism, love for the native country, but in reality these speeches were outrageous lies. There was no self-denial but self-interest, no idealism but self-seeking, no love of the native country but love of gain, no love for Lithuania but love for Lithuania's money, for Lithuania's estates, for a profitable business, for a fat salary. The archives of Lithuania's courts of law and our memory still keep fresh the endless cases considering embezzlements, bribery and larcenies, . . . criminal cases involving members of former governments and many, many others. This was the way in which the Lithuanian bourgeoisie emerged, the way which a handful of mercenary politicians followed at the expense of poverty-stricken and exploited working masses. The bourgeois Lithuania was a paradise for big landowners, profiteers and exploiters, and an inferno for the working people. But now the people of Lithuania has said: "Stop that!" and

it will not happen again. We have had enough of landlord's Lithuania, of exploiters' Lithuania — now the Lithuania of the working people has resurrected!

The emergence of the bourgeoisie did not favour the flourishing of Lithuanian culture but even deliberately obstructed its development. Throughout all those twenty-two years, it was repeatedly dinned into our ears that Lithuanian culture stagnated, that illiteracy was growing. The broad masses were deprived of any active sources of art and learning, could not make use of them. The recent weeks have clearly shown the festering sores on the body of our nation, sores which have now all opened and demand urgent treatment.

The political aspect of the life presents an unattractive picture too. Has there ever been in Lithuania a genuine people's democracy? No, there has not. Though there were even three constitutions, they have never been implemented. There have never been freedom of conscience, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and organizations. In the elections to the Seimas the working people could not nominate their own candidates. When the composition of the first Seimas was found to be unfavourable to the clericals, the representatives of the Workers' Groups who were nominated as candidates to the second Seimas were arrested and innocently imprisoned for two and a half years. The second Seimas that lasted for three years brought to Lithuania a dictatorship of the clericals which ruled with a majority of one vote and that being a Russian White Guard's! The third Seimas in which the Populists and the Social Democrats had the majority, offered what looked like a ray of hope in Lithuania's political atmosphere, but that experiment in idyllic democracy came to a sad end — the fascist coup d'état of December 17, 1926, carried out by the reactionary officers with the blessing of the clericals. Why did it happen? Firstly, because the security of freedom relied more on the government apparatus than on the people itself. Secondly, because, while restricting the freedom of the Communist Party — the defender of the people's interests — a free hand was

given to the enemies of the people. Let it be an eternal lesson to the people of Lithuania. Freedom should not be given to the enemies of the people for they, making use of that freedom, enslave the people. The arbitrary and oppressive regime that emerged in Lithuania after 1926 destroyed even the illusionary democracy which Lithuania had enjoyed for a few years. It sounds paradoxical that the Constitution promulgated in 1928 by Smetona and Voldemaras themselves was not given effect for eight years. And only in 1936, after the peasant uprising in Suvalkija, following the example of Poland, a Seimas was cleverly contrived to deceive the working people and to consolidate Smetona's dictatorship. The Seimas adopted a new constitution which has been valid until now. This was an instrument directed against the working people. We are using the same instrument for the working people, against the enemies of the people. The people is wielding the same stick, but has turned it over to strike Smetona's arbitrary regime a deadly blow. The People's Government considered it below its dignity to have anything to do with that creation of the sad past and dissolved the "Seimas" without delay. As to the Constitution, which the former regime managed to violate, the People's Government has corrected it by the Electoral Law restituting the active and passive suffrage to the citizens who have reached the age of 21. Thus the servicemen of our People's Army have been enfranchised. The representation of the people in the People's Seimas has been also increased: previously one deputy was elected for each 50,000 inhabitants while now, in accordance with the new People's Seimas Electoral Law, one deputy was elected for 35,000 inhabitants. I hope that the People's Seimas will not condemn the People's Government for those changes and will approve them. As to the future Constitution of Lithuania, I can say on behalf of the People's Government that the idea suggested at many a meeting of the working people is the only true way of solving the problem. We need a clear, firm, iron constitution, which would not depend on any occasional factors. We ought

to follow the best examples, and the best example of such a constitution can only be the Constitution of the USSR. . . .

The previous Lithuanian dictatorial governments, so powerless and unable to orientate themselves in the problems of international policy, so servile and yielding to foreign ultimatums, were utterly severe and cruel to the ultimatums presented by the people. Every demand of the people was rejected and any manifestation of the activity was suppressed by force. This was equally done by the purely Nationalist government and by the subsequent so-called consolidation governments which in reality were the governments called to salvage Smetona's regime, for the "leaders" of the Christian Democrats and the Populists, completely isolated from the masses and fearing the victory of the people, were blindly supporting the regime of the Nationalist dictatorship. And the regime seemed to be stable and in all likelihood intended to stay long in power. Indeed, the fraudulent elections to the bodies of local self-government held last winter had paved the way for the 1941 elections of a new "Seimas" on the same basis as the previous one. It was no wonder and the people had long ago been sure that the dictatorship could be got rid of but with a cudgel. Today all this is the past thrown into the garbage-box of history. That past shall be always remembered as an example of how things should not be done, what must not and won't ever happen in Lithuania again. . . .

Certain naive economists in Lithuania were repeatedly declaring Lithuania to be a happy island untouched by the economic crisis raging then everywhere. As we have seen, it did not take much time for the waves of the crisis to inundate our "happy island"; we still remember how badly our peasants were hit by the crisis, how the crisis nearly drove them mad. "We, farmers, are jumping like fakirs on hot coals and cannot find a way out," used to say the farmer cursing the blind regime. Just as naive were the politicians who clung to their theory of a "happy island" in politics, imagining that it was sufficient to proclaim neutrality to save Lithuania from all dangers.

In this the Lithuanian politicians were not alone — the likes of them in many other countries thought the same way and, like ostriches, put their heads in the sand of neutrality. That this was a mistake and a folly was shown by the fate of many states in the last few years which has fully frustrated such egoistic thinking. Only now, when the Soviet Union has held us out its mighty helping hand, we can be sure of our future and our security. Only now we can be sure that Lithuania will not be a toy in anybody's hands, will not be used by any power as a base against the Soviet Union. Lithuania has broken with the egoistical nations and is resolutely marching alongside the Soviet Union, devoting her strength to the creation of a new world of peace.

Our gold-mouthed gentlemen used to say that Lithuania's clock should be put one hundred years forward. What amazed most was that these words came from the people belonging to the camp which was assiduously putting the clock back to the Middle Ages. Today we can say with confidence that on June 15 Lithuania's clock was put forward more than a hundred years when compared to the snail's pace peculiar to Lithuania's life during the last dozen or so years. . . .

It was said that our country lacked enthusiasm. But look what enthusiasm there is in Lithuania now. What eloquence, songs, poetry, and new works has it displayed. That joyous enthusiasm should be turned and is turning into enthusiasm of work and creative effort. This new labour enthusiasm, which will bring about an increase in productivity of labour, shall be the basis of our wealth, more precious than all the capital, than all the gold funds. In the past our industrious and gifted people could not develop their powers, because they were blunted as the nation was held in the position of a labour slave. Now the nation shall show and will show miracles. There is no place among us for drones, for the lazy, for those living in idleness, while the persons performing acts of sabotage intentionally shall be punished with revolutionary severity.

For decades we were fed up with speeches on national unity. This unity was important and necessary for Lithuania, but fraught with danger for Smetona's regime. So the Nationalist clique used to bawl out and clamour for unity, while actually disrupting it deliberately and sowing dissension. Some time ago, at the 1935 World Congress of Lithuanians I happened to speak from this very rostrum about unity, pointing out that there were several kinds of unity. One of them is the unity of sardines in a tin, where they lie tightly packed and not the slightest movement is possible. But there is another unity — that of a symphony orchestra — where everyone does his job and, although various instruments are played, everything nicely blends into one huge harmony. Only the triumphant working people could achieve such a harmonious unity. That great unity has been impressively demonstrated during the recent elections to the People's Seimas in which an unprecedentedly high percentage of voters participated. Hence, the People's Seimas can rightly be considered not just an ordinary Seimas but a really sovereign body expressing the will of the Lithuanian people, a National Assembly entitled to fully decide the fate of Lithuania and to solve all the basic problems, giving a proper shape to the national unity which has been so mightily displayed.

As to the People's Government and its work, I should like in the first place to explain why it has acquired the honourable name of People's Government and in what it differs from the previous governments. The People's Government has come from the people, from the circles who understand the interests of the people in the broadest sense and fight for these interests. It feels the confidence and approval of the broad masses. The People's Government considers this confidence to be an expression of trust in the work it has performed, in the landmarks it has laid down for its work. As we see, that direction meets the requirements of the broadest masses which enables the People's Government to follow the chosen path with clarity and firmness. The previous governments had enjoyed only the support of this or that group, while the governments

of the last 13 years had no support whatever among the people — they shamelessly usurped the people's rights, relied only on naked force and arbitrary rule. During these 13 years the dictator Smetona assumed all the rights of an absolute monarch. Herein lies the greatest difference between the present Government and the previous ones.

The People's Government has emerged after the well-known provocative actions of the former government which resulted in an open conflict with the Soviet Union, the allied and friendly state to Lithuania. Hence, the primary task of the People's Government has been to mend the deteriorated relations, to fully apply them in the spirit of the Mutual Assistance Pact and pave the way for such relations which would conform to the universally expressed will of our people to march shoulder to shoulder with the peoples of the Soviet Union. We are pleased to note that the Government of the Soviet Union has shown a great understanding of our needs. We can say without any doubt that now the relations between Lithuania and the Soviet Union are founded on the spirit of great mutual trust, friendship and close alliance. In the field of foreign policy, good relations with other countries have been maintained.

During this month the Council of People's Ministers, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Prof. Krėvė-Mickevičius, has acted with great energy and vigour, which has been witnessed and felt by the entire country.

The first act of the People's Government was the release of the political prisoners who had fought for the people's rights. Over 400 political prisoners have been set free. Some of them spent from ten to fifteen years in jail, while Comrade Zibertas, whom we see in this hall among the deputies of the People's Seimas, has been in prison even twenty years. Immediately upon their release, most of the freed prisoners, despite the trials they had to experience, have enthusiastically joined in the work to realize and safeguard the achievements of the people. Many of them hold responsible posts: Comrade Sniečkus, who so successfully fought against the political police of the old regime, now heads the Security Department, and there are others

too. Many of them are seen here as deputies of the People's Seimas. And so comrades, former inmates of the Dimitravas Concentration Camp and all political prisoners, the great hour has struck! We greet all the liberated fighters, battle-hardened and unbroken, who have preserved the unshakeable spirit of struggle and self-sacrifice which marks the victory of the people. The present triumph is the best reward for the sufferings endured by you and many thousands of others. May the spirit of your struggle and love for the people spread all over Lithuania, may it inspire the entire working people of Lithuania to continue the struggle for a new life.

As you know, the Nationalist Union and a number of other harmful and detrimental organizations have been closed down immediately, while the political and other organizations of the working people, such as the Lithuanian Communist Party, the Lithuanian Young Communist League, the trade unions and others have been legalized. Thus all the wrong done to these organizations by the previous regimes is now redressed. I greet the Lithuanian Communist Party and allied organizations as staunch fighters for the rights of the working people, as the combatant vanguard and leaders.

A vigorous purge of the state apparatus was undertaken, with new forces to guard the interests of the people being rapidly organized. The Security Department, but recently striking with hatred and wrath, has assumed a new aspect; it is now worthy of respect, love and support in the fight against open and disguised people's enemies and saboteurs. The police which has recently been a tool in the hands of the people's enemies is now being reeducated so as to stand guard over the interests of the people alongside the people's militia. The press, as we see, unanimously serves the people's interests. Where the way is clear and tested, where it leads to the well-being of the people, there can be no hesitations and this is well understood by the press, but that understanding is to be further deepened in particular by widening the scope of the mass press.

A certain number of the people's enemies, traitors and self-interested persons, having forgotten all their patriotic declarations, have fled abroad. As a consequence, their property will be confiscated and used in creating the new life.

The former local self-government bodies, built on property qualification, have been dissolved, the new ones will be elected on a new basis.

The organization and reorganization of labour, the raising of its productivity is of paramount importance. Therefore, a new Ministry of Labour has been set up. It has already managed to provide employment for 12,000 people at public works and has taken a number of measures for the enhancement of labour protection, social security and the welfare of the working people. Workers and all the working people, you must know that your affairs are no longer dealt with by red-tape officials, but by your own comrades who understand your concerns and are going to tackle them jointly with the trade unions and with a new body designed to defend and represent the interests of the working people — the Workers' Soviets — the body which had played such a glorious role in the revolutions and which had won power in Soviet Russia. While greeting the Workers' Soviets, the People's Government expects that in Lithuania, too, they will do their duty with honour.

The setting up of the new Ministry of Health and Social Welfare marks the particular attention to be given to matters of public health, which were sadly neglected in the past. The aim of this Ministry is to provide free medical service, social welfare and social insurance. The work in this direction has already started. For instance, free dispensary treatment has been extended, the number of beds in medical institutions and sanatoriums has been increased, new hospitals in provinces, mother-and-child care centres are being set up. . . .

In the field of agriculture, mention should be made of the Land Reform Law, being elaborated presently, the main points of which will be decided upon by the People's Seimas. The payment of all grants to big landowners,

whose interests were protected by the former regime, has been stopped. In the wake of the old reform, the Smetona Government had paid out a compensation of some 20 million litas of people's money — a sum which could have been used for matters of more importance and urgency. Much has been done in order to improve the position of small and middle farmers. Farming has been and remains the basic branch of our economy, we need to take care of it and to raise its productivity. At this juncture it is important that all works should be performed in time and properly. Nobody should leave his or her job or undertake inappropriate changes. Thus we shall avoid demoralization and quietly implement such reforms in the field of agriculture which the People's Seimas will find it necessary to introduce.

In the field of education, the obscurants have been excluded from the Lithuanian school and the state treasury has been freed from maintaining the clericals. The school will be reformed, education will be made accessible to everyone, civic consciousness and creative spirit being fostered at school. Instead of other foreign languages of little practical use, the teaching of Russian — the official common language of the fraternal USSR — will be introduced. The long expected Law of People's Cultural Fund has been adopted, for which 80,000 litas of donations have been collected in a short time. Plans are under way to expand adult education. Our artistic tribe has been rallying its strength and we expect that their creative endeavours will reflect the great changes in the life of our country, will help in creating and beautifying this new life.

Many changes have been made in the old reactionary judicature. The old laws, as expressing the will of the former ruling class, do not answer the interests and the will of the working people. So, new times will create new laws. As to the long expected Matrimony and Civil Registration Law, there can hardly be any doubts that it will soon be enforced.

In the field of finance, attempts are being made to adapt our economic system to the interests of the people.

Thus we have cut much of the unnecessary expenditure, such as the payment of salaries to the clergy, pensions to the people's enemies, while the payment of other large pensions has been reduced. Hundreds of millions will not be spent as before, to raise artificially the class of lords. The salaries of top officials will be lowered, and those of the lower ones raised. The state budget is being reorganized to allow an efficient use of state money for the benefit of the people. A concrete step has been made to the long expected reduction of rents, abnormally high previously. Electricity rates, so high in bourgeois Lithuania who feared light, have been cut.

The scope of the state control activities has been extended and adopted to the present-day requirements. The State Control has assumed the supervision of private enterprises, the representatives of the State Control have been appointed to the banks and to bigger economic institutions. The circulation of money is being regulated, profiteering is dealt with vigorously, market prices of goods are being adjusted. The State Control is working in contact with the workers' committees. In the field of communications, the construction of already commenced and new railways and highways is carried on. No contractors are employed on the projects and several thousand workers have been provided with jobs.

So I have briefly surveyed the work done in one single month of the People's Government's existence and its nearest programme. It was necessary to make quite significant changes in the personnel of all departments. The state apparatus is still far from perfection. But the main thing is that the chief landmarks have been set up. The People's Government is going to destroy and remove everything that interferes with or prevents the smooth development of the new life. While repudiating the past and exposing its vices, we should remember that there surely were not only scoundrels and traitors. In those twenty-two years we have seen many a good intention and effort coming from the broad public. Our people and most of the community are sound. This has been evidenced by the op-

position of the broad masses to the former regime and to all those political leaders who were supporting it. Because of its reactionary character and sluggishness, the old system obstructed and frustrated healthy and progressive ideas and projects. The time has come now when both the Government and the entire state apparatus are firmly determined to implement all the projects, useful and advantageous to the progress and well-being of the nation. . . .

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, pp. 12-17.

No. 28

Statement by Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krėvė-Mickevičius, Concerning the Powers of the Government

July 21, 1940

Esteemed Deputies of the People's Seimas! The People's Government of Lithuania, which took the helm of state at a difficult time, has always held that it is only a provisional government for the working people of Lithuania are the real masters of the country. Hence, it regarded its primary task to be the convention of the Seimas, elected by all the working people, which alone would have the right to set up further landmarks in the life of the country and to decide on the future state system of Lithuania.

In addition, the People's Government of Lithuania deemed its duty to preserve law and order in all fields of life until the convocation of the Seimas, and to strengthen the ties of friendship with our powerful neighbour — the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Today, when you, esteemed Deputies of the Seimas, are in session as the real masters of the country and representatives expressing the will of the working people, we, the People's Government of Lithuania, consider our mission completed and, on behalf of the entire People's

Government, I hereby hand in my resignation in order to enable the Seimas to appoint a new Government at its own discretion.

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, p. 20.

No. 29

Motion by Writer Liudas Gira, Deputy of the Seimas, to Express Confidence in the Government and to Authorize it to Continue in Office

July 21, 1940

Citizens Deputies of the People's Seimas! We have just heard the statement by Professor Krėvė-Mickevičius, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the effect that the People's Government is giving up its powers. Before this, we have heard from Justas Paleckis, Acting President of the Republic, and we ourselves know how much good the Government, the first People's Government of our Republic, has accomplished for the sake of the people and the country, and that in such a short time since the downfall of Smetona's regime.

Therefore, citizens Deputies of the Seimas, I believe that I shall correctly express your thoughts if I reply to the declaration we have just heard, on behalf of all of us, as follows:

We, the People's Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, express complete confidence in the People's Government and sincere gratitude for all it has accomplished.

I move: to approve the activities of the People's Government, to express our confidence in its work and to authorize it to continue in office until the formation of a new People's Government on the basis of the new Constitution.

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, p. 21.

No. 30

Motion by Deputy of the Seimas Grigalavičius to Put on the Agenda of the First Session of the People's Seimas the Question of the State System in Lithuania

July 21, 1940

The events of the last few weeks have clearly shown that the old regime is gone forever. Therefore, the question of the state system should figure on the agenda as the number 1 issue. The task of the People's Seimas is to solve without delay this question, so important for our future. On behalf of the people's deputies of Panevėžys, Šiauliai and Kaunas districts, I move to put the question of the state system as number 1 on the agenda.

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, p. 24.

No. 31

Motion by Deputy of the Seimas Sniečkus, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, to Put on the Agenda of the First Session of the People's Seimas the Question of Lithuania's Entrance in the Soviet Union

July 21, 1940

Comrades Deputies! We have carried the motion made by Deputy Grigalavičius to discuss the question of the state system in Lithuania. I have no doubt that the People's Seimas, expressing the hopes and aspirations of the people, will solve this question by introducing in Lithuania the Soviet system, the most democratic in the world, the system which the entire people of Lithuania is demanding.

But comrades, we would have stopped half-way and offended against the people of Lithuania should we limit ourselves to this question only.

Today all the working people of Lithuania demand to join the mighty family of peoples of the Soviet Union.

Thus we, the deputies of Kaunas, Vilnius and Šiauliai districts, after consulting each other, have resolved to move to put on the agenda the question of joining the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The establishment of Soviet power in Lithuania by itself cannot yet provide a firm guarantee of safeguarding socialist Lithuania against imperialist attempts of any kind.

The Lithuanian people, who has undergone severe trials of war, occupation and alien yoke, knows that such a guarantee can only be provided by joining the family of the fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union....

Comrades Deputies! We should realize that only one road is open to the Lithuanian people if it wishes to live happily and freely. That road is to join the Soviet Union. Any other road would be disastrous for our country.

So on behalf of the delegations of Kaunas, Vilnius and Šiauliai, I move to put on the agenda of the People's Seimas the question of Lithuania's entrance in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, pp. 24-26.

No. 32

Motion by Deputy of the Seimas Bauža to Put the Land Question on the Agenda of the First Session of the People's Seimas

July 21, 1940

On behalf of the deputies representing Telšiai, Vilnius, Panevėžys and Alytus, I move one more item — the land question.

The land question belongs to the most fundamental, important and urgent questions unsolved until now. The landlords who reigned in the days of the old regime tackled

the land problem not seeking to provide the working people with land but as a means to make the people obedient. Plots were distributed in accord with the Christian land reform and the people were to suffer without any other aid. So the landlords jeered at them in anticipation, repeating: "Those of you who build huts better have them built on wheels, for you will have to remove them one day." Yet the regime of Smetona did even better: many settlers in our state needed not remove their huts on wheels, because they lost the huts themselves which were auctioned off. This sheer mockery at the working people, at the working peasants must be radically and forever redressed. Therefore, I move to put the land question as item 3 on the agenda.

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, p. 26.

No. 33

Motion by Deputy of the Seimas Baranauskas to Put on the Agenda of the First Session of the People's Seimas the Question of the Nationalization of Banks, Large Enterprises and Factories

July 21, 1940

Comrades! We, the deputies of the People's Seimas representing the districts of Šiauliai, Panevėžys and Telšiai, after taking counsel together, have decided to move to be put on the agenda of the People's Seimas the following item: nationalization of banks and large enterprises. Comrades, the people of Lithuania demand the nationalization of banks, large enterprises and factories. Such demands are being made at meetings and gatherings, such demands have been heard here, in the Seimas, from the workers' delegations who came to greet us. The people's demands and aspirations are an implicit command for us, deputies of the People's Seimas. The deputies of the People's Seimas, representing the above districts, move to include this item into the agenda to make it possible to

carry out the nationalization of banks and large enterprises. Only the take-over of banks and enterprises by the state will put an end to the exploitation of workers, peasants and the entire people....

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, p. 27.

No. 34

Extract from the Declaration of the People's Seimas Proclaiming Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic

July 21, 1940

The regime of Smetona, indifferent to the real interests of the people, pushed the Lithuanian internal and external policy into a hopeless impasse. The vital interests of the Lithuanian working people were sacrificed to the selfish interests of small groups of wealthy people and exploiters. The destiny of the toiling people of the cities and villages were: unemployment, uncertainty for the future, privations, and inequality of ethnic groups. For many years the people were oppressed by this reactionary regime....

The Lithuanian people could no longer tolerate such arbitrariness and treachery in their relations with foreign governments. The people liquidated the hated Government together with the high administration and so cleared the way for the free elections of the People's Seimas, which really could represent the interests of the working people and which was constructed by the people's own hands.

The days of July 14-15 were historic days in the life of the toiling people of Lithuania. In these days was born the alliance of workers, peasants, and working intelligentsia. These days marked the victory of the platform of the Union of the Working People of Lithuania. This platform rallied all honest patriots of the country and all who cherished Lithuania's interests.

In these days the Lithuanian people expressed its will to abolish the political domination of landlords and capi-

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M. J. Griffin, S. J. Griffin & P. M. Bruneau (eds)

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talists forever, and also to form a real people's Government and with its own hands to begin the reorganization of the governmental structure of our country. The victory of the Union of the Working People of Lithuania is a historic turning point, granting to the working people all civic and political rights, guaranteeing a better future for them and future generations.

The People's Seimas, as representative of the sovereign will of Lithuania, being called upon to strengthen its victories achieved in the struggle with plutocrats, considers its main task and duty to resolve the question of the form of the Lithuanian regime on a new basis. From the great historic experience of the peoples of the USSR, we have learned that only the Soviet power is a real representative and defender of the interests of the working people, that only the Soviet government is a real people's government, where the country is governed by the people itself without capitalists and landlords. Only the Soviets represent a real incarnation of the alliance between workers and peasants....

The People's Seimas, expressing the unanimous will of the working people, proclaims that the Soviet system shall be introduced in Lithuania.

Lithuania shall be proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic. Beginning today all power in the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic shall belong to the working people of the cities and villages, represented in the Soviets by their own representatives.

The People's Seimas is firmly convinced that all inhabitants of Lithuania will rally around the Soviet Government to assure welfare, economic and cultural prosperity, to give our country freedom and happiness, and to lead the country towards final victory of the people.

Long live the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic!

Long live the Soviets of the working people's deputies!

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, pp. 37-40.

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Extract from the Declaration Adopted by the People's Seimas on Lithuania's Entrance in the USSR

July 21, 1940

... The existing Soviet Socialist Republics are not closed and separated one from another, but they constitute an indestructible union. They entered the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics formed on an equal free basis.

From experience we have learned that collaboration between the Soviet republics gave them exceptional prosperity, huge economic and cultural development. In a short time they became the most progressive republics from a political, economic and cultural point of view. Never would an individual republic achieve such results.

From experience we have learned that only united Soviet republics could oppose imperialistic efforts to enslave small people. Without a state's union of the Soviet republics, without gathering together their economic and military forces into a union it would be impossible to oppose the united forces of capitalists in either economic or in military fields.

The Lithuanian people know that the policy of the Soviet Union toward Lithuania was friendly at all times. If Lithuania was not seized by the landlords of Poland, if the old Lithuanian capital Vilnius was returned to Lithuania, if Lithuania could stay away from World War fire, if the Lithuanian people could establish in their country the only just system of government — Soviet system — it is all due to the Soviet Union. Therefore, the Lithuanian people in all times have seen a better future in closer relationship with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The reactionary criminal clique of former Lithuanian rulers obstructed by every means the fraternal relationship between Lithuania and the USSR, trying to prevent the conclusion of a firm and inviolable union between the USSR and Lithuania.

Now, the Lithuanian people, freed from violence and lawlessness and having established a new state and social order, shall ratify by law a firm friendship and union between the Lithuanian Republic and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Lithuanian People's Seimas is convinced that only entrance in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will guarantee the true sovereignty of the Lithuanian State, the real development of industry and economy, the real blossom of national culture, and the complete development of material and spiritual forces of the people.

Obedient to the will of the people, who overthrew the old regime of oppression and lawlessness, the regime of exploitation of man, the People's Seimas resolved:

To ask the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to admit the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic in the body of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a Union Republic on the same basis as the Ukrainian, the Byelorussian, and other Union Republics.

Long live the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic!

Long live the great Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics!

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, pp. 57-58.

No. 36

Extract from the Speech of Sniečkus Delivered on Behalf of the Credentials Committee

July 22, 1940

Comrades Deputies of the People's Seimas, citizens of Socialist Soviet Lithuania! July 21 and July 22 — these dates shall never blot out of the memory of our nation. They mark the most significant turn in all our long and glorious history — the turn from slavery and lawlessness

to freedom, well-being and happiness. Today and yesterday the Seimas adopted decisions of historic importance. Expressing the will of the people, the Seimas has decided that henceforth Lithuania shall be a Soviet Socialist Republic.

By adopting the Declaration on Lithuania's entrance in the USSR and requesting the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union to admit Lithuania into the USSR as a Union Republic, the Seimas has enacted an old desire of our people.

However, the Seimas did not confine itself to establishing the state system. At the same time it has created the material base of Soviet Socialist Lithuania by solving the land question in favour of the working people. Thereby an end has been put to the domination of big landowners and exploiters.

The historic decisions of the Seimas were prepared by the entire previous struggle of the Lithuanian people, their features being outlined during the election campaign.

The bourgeois regime had oppressed, despised and deceived the working people of Lithuania for 22 years. Hardly had it fallen, hardly had our people relished the coming of a new epoch which brought them freedom from oppression and neglect, allowed them to speak out boldly about their sore subjects, when the activity of the masses in Lithuania stirred up unusually. This activity was especially impressive during the election campaign to the People's Seimas, at hundreds of meetings of workers, peasants, servicemen and working intelligentsia throughout Lithuania. It would be perhaps superfluous to speak in detail about the feelings of the Lithuanian masses, for there is hardly a single person here who did not witness himself and did not share the unprecedented enthusiasm permeating the election campaign to this first genuine People's Seimas of utmost importance for the country. Unfortunately, during the first polling day the weather was bad almost all over Lithuania — it was raining nearly all the day, roads in many places became waterlogged, and in

lower places hardly passable. Yet, in spite of this, the people went on foot and horse to cast their votes for the candidates of the Working People's Union of Lithuania, for every voter realized that for the first time in the history of our country he was going to elect people of his own, representatives of the working people, into whose hands he could safely put all his wishes and desires, all his hopes for a better life. As we know, in such a contingency which might have prevented the working people from expressing their will, the elections were prolonged by the President of the Republic by one more day. It turned out, however, that an overwhelming number of voters went to the polls on the first day. Still, many of those who during the first day could not go to the polls because of advanced age, state of health or for some other reason, made use of their vote on the second day. The People's Seimas was elected by the entire working people of Lithuania without resorting to any measures of compulsion or reprisals, for the people realized perfectly the enormous importance this Seimas had for the fate of toiling Lithuania. . . .

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, pp. 100-101.

No. 37

Extract from the Declaration of the People's Seimas Proclaiming the Land State Property

...

July 22, 1940

... Expressing the will of all the working people and in accord with the vital interests of the working peasants, the People's Seimas proclaims all the land of Lithuania, its natural resources, its forests and waters to be property of all the people, i.e. state property. Hence the land shall belong to those who work it.

The Seimas decrees that no individual farm in Lithuania shall exceed 30 hectares*; surplus land obtained by cutting down the farms exceeding that rate will go into a State Land Fund, to be used for distribution to the landless and poor peasants.

All the land which henceforth is in the hands of the working peasants and also the land which will be made over by the state to the landless and poor peasants shall be secured to peasants for tenure in perpetuity. Any attempts to infringe upon the personal property of peasants or to impose on them collective farms against their will shall be severely punished as harmful to the interests of the people and the state.

In order to ease the position of the peasants, the People's Seimas decides to free them from all the installment payments left by the previous land reform. In addition to that, the Seimas charges the Government with the task of considering measures to ease the position of the peasants in connection with debts and obligations incurred by them, which still aggravate the position of the working peasants, and to review taxation in order to abolish unjust taxes and ease the burden of taxes imposed on the working population.

To mark the historic day of the proclamation of Soviet power in Lithuania — July 21 — the Seimas hereby decrees to free the working peasants from arrears and fines imposed on them by administrative bodies.

The provision by the state of landless and poor peasants with land puts an end to hunger and poverty — the inseparable companions of the political and economic rule of landlords and capitalists.

Long live the working people of Soviet Lithuania — the sole masters of the land!

Long live the unbreakable unity of workers and peasants!

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, pp. 97-98.

* 74 acres.

BANKU IR NEFINANSINIŲ PRAMONĖS NACIONALIZACIJOS DEKLARACIJA

Laisvųjų Lietuvos laukio 1990 suvaikėjimui ir nufingimui Kaune, Vilniuje, Šiauliuose, Panevėžyje, Klaipėdoje ir daruose viešbalaiai patiklavos bankų ir stambiosios pramonės nacionalizacija.

Laudies Seimas laiko šios teikalavimas teisėtai. Darbo žmonių sąkurli šitai užuot ejo jų patų nauda, būtinai nage sanlyvarkeje būvo naudojant įmoninių ir fabrikantių bankinių ir darinių priabūvų ir beaikių eikvojimui, o tai stume laudų skurdą ir nedarbą.

Via ekonomikų šalies sistemo koncentravosi būtiniajos raišos ir būvo paimone dirbančios laudies eksploatavai. Tokie bankai, kaip Žydų lenkabinis Bankas, Lietuvos Bankas, Komercijos Bankas, Žemės Bankas ir kiti, lai pat ir stambiosios pramonės įmonės kaip „Šiluma“, „Irbė“, „Nemunas“, „Metalas“ ir kiti vaidino eia svarbiausią vaidmenį.

Laudies Seimas, suprasdamas laudies teikalavimų teisėtumą, atelbia bankų ir stambiosios pramonės nacionalizaciją vienoje Socialistinės Tarybų Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje. Nacionalizavus bankus ir stambiąją pramonę, respublikos laudies tampa laisvo turtu saminoma.

Laudies Seimas paveda Vyriausybei laisvųjų sąkurli ir patitvisti priklausančių nacionalizacijai, bankų ir stambiosios imonių sąkurli.

Tegyvuoja Socialistinė Tarybų Lietuvos Respublika

Laisvųjų Lietuvos Pramonės

Laudies Seimas

Seimas

A. Venclova
P. Griška

Vyriausybė

A. Gedvilas
J. Augustavičius

Declaration Adopted by the People's Seimas on the Nationalization of Banks and Large-scale Industry

July 23, 1940

At their meetings in Kaunas, Vilnius, Šiauliai and Panevėžys, in villages and on estates, the liberated people of Lithuania unanimously demanded nationalization of banks and large-scale industry.

The People's Seimas deems those demands to be just. The wealth created by the working people, instead of being used for their own benefit, under the bourgeois rule was a source of enrichment and squandering for factory owners, bankers and landlords, thus driving the people to poverty and unemployment.

The country's economic system was concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie and served as a means for the exploitation of the working people. Such banks as the Jewish Central Bank, the Lithuanian Bank, the Commercial Bank, the Land Bank, etc. as well as the large industrial enterprises — Inkaras, Drobė, Nemunas, Metalas, and others — played the leading role here.

Conscious of the just demands made by the people, the People's Seimas hereby declares the nationalization of banks and large-scale industry throughout the whole territory of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. The nationalization of banks and large-scale industry makes the people of the Republic masters of the country's wealth.

The People's Seimas charges the Government to immediately draw up and to approve the list of banks and large enterprises subject to nationalization.

Long live the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic!

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, pp. 123-124.

No. 39

Motion by Deputy of the People's Seimas Pakarklis, Minister of Justice, Concerning the Authorized Mission to Submit to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR the Declaration of the People's Seimas on Lithuania's Entrance in the USSR

July 23, 1940

Deputies of the People's Seimas! The day before yesterday the People's Seimas of Lithuania adopted a Declaration asking the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to admit the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic into the body of the Soviet Union. For this purpose it is necessary to send a delegation to Moscow. I move that this delegation should be composed as follows: Justas Paleckis, Mėcys Gedvilas, Liudas Adomuskas, Antanas Venclova, Liudas Gira, Vincas Vitkauskas, Motiejus Šumauskas, Karolis Didžiulis, Petras Cvirka, Salomėja Nėris, Kazimieras Petrauskas, Pranas Zibertas, Stasė Vaineikienė, Icikas Meskupas, Viktoras Ditkevičius, Pranas Petrauskas, Juozas Demskis, Marija Kutraitė, Birutė Abdulskaitė.

Verbatim Report of the People's Seimas, Kaunas, 1940, p. 133.

No. 40

Extract from the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party to the Working People Issued to Mark the Introduction of the Soviet Socialist System in Lithuania

July 24, 1940

Comrades workers, peasants, servicemen and all other working people!

The time has come when we are really free, when the dream cherished by our people for many a long year has

come true. The Soviet socialist system has been introduced in our country. . . .

We have proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic. We would bear in mind, however, the Seimas decisions alone will not bring us a socialist republic. These historic decisions have to be implemented, socialist Lithuania must be built by ourselves.

Comrades workers and peasants, servicemen, working intelligentsia, sons and daughters of Lithuania! Let us join our efforts in the cause of socialist construction! Our enemies are on the alert, and with time passing they will become ever more determined. Foreboding their end and seeing no escape, the enemies of the people, overt and in disguise, have been performing acts of sabotage, destroying and damaging the wealth of the country which from now on belongs to the entire people.

Do not allow the enemies of the people to inflict damage on our wealth! Let us rally immediately and keep ranks! Start setting up labourers' and peasants' committees to protect the estates, now belonging to them, and to organize the working people in the countryside in general. Let us set up — wherever they are still missing — factory committees to guard enterprises from subversive activities on the part of former factory owners and their disguised accomplices. Let us strengthen and cultivate conscious discipline of labour and raise labour productivity, because from now on we are working for ourselves. Let us establish a numerous and strong People's Militia — an effective weapon against various enemies and saboteurs! Let us root out all those who would like to put on us the fetters of capitalism again!

May the great enthusiasm shown in the squares and streets, in towns and villages now be turned into creative enthusiasm, the one which would make our native country a beautiful and happy place to live in. Let every working man redouble his efforts in the construction of socialism. Our immediate task is to sweep away all the survivals of capitalist slavery and, with the help of the fraternal peoples

of the USSR, to build as speedily as possible a happy and prosperous socialist Lithuania.

Long live the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic!

Long live the Lithuanian Communist Party — the leader of Lithuania's working people!

Long live the friendly family of Soviet peoples! . . .

July 24, 1940

PII PA, f. 1770, 1940, b. 1, l. 6.

NOTES

Chapter I

1. Klaipėda Territory: the western part of the Lithuanian state, occupies an area of 2,848 sq km, population 154,700 (in 1939).
2. Voldemaras henchmen: adherents of Augustinas Voldemaras, Lithuania's Prime Minister in 1926-29, members of the terrorist Geležinis Vilkas (Iron Wolf) organization. They sought close relations between Lithuania and Germany and acted as Nazi agents in Lithuania.
3. Smetona-Mironas Government: guidance of state and government affairs effected by President of Lithuania Antanas Smetona (1874-1944) and Prime Minister Vladas Mironas (1880-1953). Smetona also acted as supreme chief of the ruling Lithuanian Nationalist Union, while Mironas was its president.
4. Statute of Klaipėda Territory: a kind of constitution, establishing the local bodies of governing, laying down their competence and functions.
5. Seimelis (Land diet): the legislative body of the Klaipėda Territory.
6. Klaipėda Convention: the Convention concluded between Lithuania, on the one part, and the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan, on the other part, concerning the transfer to Lithuania of the rights of sovereignty over the Klaipėda Territory. According to the 1919 Versailles Peace Treaty, the Klaipėda Territory was placed under provisional administration of the Allied Powers — Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. France was given the mandatory powers over the territory. On January 9, 1923, the Klaipėda Territory was attached to the Republic of Lithuania on a basis of autonomy. On May 8, 1924, a Convention was signed in Paris according to which Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan transferred to Lithuania the rights of sovereignty over the Klaipėda Territory. On October 3, 1924, the Convention was registered with the League of Nations Secretariat, thus acquiring international power. The Convention stipulated (Article 15) that the rights of sovereignty over the Klaipėda Territory and their implementation could not be transferred to anybody without the agreement of the High Contracting Parties.
7. Klaipėda events: reference is made here to the annexation of the Klaipėda Territory by Nazi Germany.
8. Activists: members of the pro-Nazi Lithuanian Action Union founded in the late 1938 by the Voldemaras adherents (see Note 2).

The Union sought rapprochement with Nazi Germany and was striving to make Smetona, Lithuania's dictator president, incorporate their leader Voldemaras into the government.

9. Lithuanian Šauliai Association: nationalistic paramilitary organization, founded in 1919. After the occupation of the Klaipėda Territory by Nazi Germany in March, 1939, the menace to Lithuania's independence increased. At this critical moment, the Lithuanian Communist Party was seeking to consolidate all the country's patriotic forces to fight the German aggression. With this end in view, the Communist Party came out in support of the Šauliai Association. After the downfall of bourgeois regime in Lithuania, the Šauliai Association was closed down.
10. Arms Fund: set up in 1935 with the aim of facilitating arm supplies for Lithuania's armed forces. The bulk of the fund consisted of donations made by the population.
11. Zaliakalnis: a suburb of Kaunas.
12. Reference is made to Antanas Smetona and Vladas Mironas, members of the bourgeois Lithuanian Council elected by the so-called Conference of Lithuanians held in Vilnius on September 18-22, 1917. With the help of the Council, the German occupation authorities were seeking to legalize Lithuania's annexation by Kaiser Germany. On December 11, 1917, the Lithuanian Council adopted a decision proclaiming an eternal alliance between Lithuania and Germany.
13. Smetona-Černius Government: Cabinet of Ministers formed by Brig Gen Jonas Černius on March 28, 1939, and approved by President of Lithuania Smetona.
14. Preston: British Chargé d'Affaires in Lithuania.
15. Collier: Director of the Northern Department of the British Foreign Office.
16. Reference is made to the Peace Treaty signed between Lithuania and Soviet Russia on July 12, 1920. In defining the borders between the two countries, the Vilnius region was recognized as an inseparable part of Lithuania. On the basis of the Treaty, Soviet Russia turned the Vilnius region over to Lithuania in August, 1920. However, on October 9, 1920, the Polish imperialists seized the Vilnius region by force and it remained occupied until September 1939.
17. Potemkin, Vladimir: Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR.
18. Treaty of Non-Aggression with the USSR was signed in Moscow on September 28, 1926, ratified on November 5, 1926, and registered with the League of Nations on March 4, 1927. Reference is made here to Article 1 of the Pact which stated: "The relations between the Lithuanian Republic and the USSR shall continue to be based on the Treaty of Peace between Lithuania and Russia, concluded in Moscow on July 12, 1920, all the provisions of which shall retain their force and inviolability."
19. Reference is made here to the note of the Government of the USSR of September 17, 1939, sent to the ambassadors and envoys of the countries maintaining diplomatic relations with the USSR. The note was received by the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow too. It stated that "the USSR will continue to adhere

to the policy of neutrality in its relations with the Lithuanian Republic”.

20. Pozdniakov, Nikolai: Soviet Minister to Lithuania.
21. *Tiesa*: the organ of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, founded in 1917.
22. Rėklaitis, Mikas (born 1895): Division General, head of the Lithuanian Government military mission formed to negotiate with the Soviet military mission the establishment of Soviet garrisons in Lithuania. Later he headed a special department of the Ministry of Defence set up for liaison service with the Soviet garrisons stationed in Lithuania.
23. Vilnius Brigade: task force made of Lithuanian army units which in October 1939 moved to Vilnius then transferred to Lithuania by the Soviet Union. The 2nd section of its Headquarters was intelligence section.
24. The order of intelligence collection about the Soviet armed forces was established by the Lithuanian General Staff Branch. On its initiative, a number of meetings were held to coordinate the intelligence collection effort against the Soviet armed forces. The participants included high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Security Department, and the Security Police district chiefs. The circular published here was also approved by the chiefs of the Lithuanian General Staff Branch. The German Abwehr was contacted on the matters concerning the espionage activities against the Soviet armed forces.
25. The Political Department of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs made an inquiry through the State Security Department as to the two versions of Red Army man Butayev's death. Povilaitis, Director of the State Security Department, in his explanation submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pointed out that the policemen, on discovering Butayev's body, noticed that he was bleeding at the mouth. It was inferred, therefore, that Butayev had died from a bullet in the mouth, which circumstance was communicated to the Soviet military command. Eventually it was established that Butayev had died from a bullet in the area of the heart.
26. In the end of May, 1940, Povilaitis, Director of the State Security Department, drew up a report on the circumstances of Red Army man Butayev's death and passed it on to Skučas, Minister of Internal Affairs. The report said that Čenkus, Vilnius Region chief of the Security Police, had charged Petrusevičius, Naujoji Vilnia District chief of the Security Police, with recruiting agents among the Red Army men. In compliance with his instructions, Petrusevičius made acquaintance with the Red Army man Butayev and had several meetings with him. Later, Čenkus instructed Petrusevičius to introduce Butayev to Aušrotas, an official of the General Staff Branch. (It should be noted that both Čenkus and Aušrotas were Gestapo agents.) Soon afterwards, Butayev disappeared. Similar information was received by Prime Minister Merkys from Juozas Brazinskas, chairman of the special commission appointed to investigate the circumstances of the disappearance of the Red Army men. During his June 7 talk with Molotov, Chairman of the Council

of People's Commissars and Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Merkys said that the circumstances of the Red Army men's disappearance in Lithuania were being investigated, and that before his departure to Moscow on June 6 some circumstances of their disappearance had already been established. Merkys informed Molotov of the circumstances pertaining to Butayev's disappearance and death, established on the basis of the information received from Povilaitis and Brazinskas.

27. *Revue Baltique*: periodical official journal of the Baltic Alliance, published in Tallinn in English, French and German. It aimed at consolidating the reactionary forces of the Baltic States, forming their common attitude to the issues both of international policy and mutual relations.
28. Eduardas Turauskas, Director of the Political Department of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in his talk of April 3, 1940, with Pozdniakov, Soviet Minister to Lithuania, said that presently he saw no obstacles to a military convention between the Baltic States.
29. In late 1939 the cooperation between the countries of the Baltic Alliance — Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia — intensified and took a turn contradictory to their treaties with the Soviet Union. The Alliance itself was shaping into an anti-Soviet bloc backed by a military convention between the three Baltic States. The General Staffs of these countries intensified their activities, regular meetings between representatives of their Army Commands were established. Thus on November 21-23, 1939, the Latvian Chief of the General Staff paid a visit to his Estonian colleague, and on November 30-December 1 he visited Div Gen Pundzevičius, Lithuania's Chief of the General Staff. On December 16, the latter repaid the visit to his Latvian colleague. On December 29, a conference of the Army Command representatives of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia was held in Riga. The participants exchanged their views on the Soviet garrisons stationed in the Baltic States and on coordinated actions towards these garrisons. In February, 1940, talks were held in Tallinn between high-ranking officials of the Estonian Ministry of Defence and Div Gen Rėklaitis, Lithuania's Deputy Minister of Defence. There were some more meetings of this kind.

General Stasys Raštikis, the then Commander of the Lithuanian Army, writes in his memoirs that in late 1939 the Lithuanian General Staff was developing strategic operation plans taking into account the presence of Soviet garrisons. Raštikis notes that thenceforth efforts were made to come to an agreement with the other Baltic States on joint military action against the USSR, although formerly leading Lithuanian politicians were against a military alliance.

30. In late 1939 and in early 1940, two conferences of foreign ministers of the Baltic Alliance were convened: the 10th Conference on December 7-8, 1939, in Tallinn and the 11th Conference on March 14-16, 1940, in Riga. The conferences outlined the military, economic and political activities of the member countries. The decisions of the conferences contravened the obligations of the Baltic States to the Soviet Union, some of them being definitely anti-Soviet.

31. The agreement on a military alliance between Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia was not fixed in a treaty but took the form of a secret protocol of the 10th Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Baltic Alliance held in Tallinn on December 7-8, 1939. The agreement sought to strengthen the military might of the Baltic States. The armed forces of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were being redeployed to improve their strategic positions in relation to the Soviet garrisons. These actions contravened the mutual assistance treaties concluded between the Baltic States and the USSR.
32. At the Government meeting of June 15, 1940, President Smetona yielded to the opinion upheld by the majority of the Government members to ask Gen Raštikis to form a new government. Raštikis had a meeting with Smetona to discuss the composition of the new cabinet. The former was for a government formed on the basis of a coalition, while the latter insisted on a government made up exclusively of people belonging to the Nationalist Party. Raštikis began talks with representatives of various political groups on their participation in the new cabinet. Meanwhile, in order to forestall the attempts of his political rivals to form a new government, Smetona himself hurriedly formed it of the Nationalists, including into it the men rejected by Raštikis. A special issue of the semi-official newspaper *Lietuvos aidas* appeared on the morning of June 15 carrying the biographies and photos of the new cabinet members. Smetona refused to work in cooperation with the political forces which then still believed in the prospects of a coalition government. Thus he remained true to the last to his antidemocratic views and dictatorial methods in politics, prevented his political rivals from taking any steps to improve the strained relations with the USSR.

Chapter II

1. The rule of the bourgeoisie in Lithuania continued from 1919 till June 1940. Seeking to consolidate and tighten up the power of the bourgeoisie, the most reactionary circles of the big national and clerical bourgeoisie late in 1926 carried out a coup d'état, liquidated the existing democratic rights, limited as they were, and established a dictatorial regime of the Nationalists. Reference is made here but to the period of their rule (1926-1940).
2. The oppositional groups of the Christian Democrats, Populists and Social Democrats looked with favour on the "coalition" Government formed by Brig Gen Černius as it included Christian Democrats and Populists. As previously, it was a fascist-type government. However, taking into account the internal and international situation arising from the loss of the Klaipėda Territory, the Government declared a number of measures to strengthen the country's independence. The Lithuanian Communist Party, while adopting a definitely critical attitude towards the Government, which virtually did not differ from its predecessors, at the same time called on the working people to

support its actions taken to defend Lithuania from an imminent Nazi aggression.

3. Reference is made here to bourgeois democratic rights.
4. The recent events referred to were meetings and gatherings of the working people held on October 11-12 in various places of Lithuania as well as the demonstrations of the working people in Kaunas. The participants of the meetings and demonstrations expressed their gratitude to the Soviet Union for the liberation of Vilnius and the region of Vilnius and their transfer to Lithuania.
5. The decision of the meeting of the LCP Central Committee referred to was elaborated in the directives issued by the Central Committee on April 1, 1939, (see p. 45 of the present publication).
6. Reference is made to the strike of construction workers in Kaunas. The whole police force was mobilized to suppress the strike. During the strike, workers' meetings at the Palace of Labour were banned. The workers who attempted to break through and hand in their demands to the Minister of Internal Affairs were whipped by the police. Many construction and other workers were arrested, 72 of them were sent to forced labour camps.
7. Brauder, Earl: member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, alternate member of the Presidium of the Executive Committee, elected at the 7th Congress of the Communist International in 1935. Subsequently he renegaded from the international Communist movement.
8. The speech referred to was delivered by Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars Molotov on September 17, 1939.
9. Marti, André: member of the Presidium and Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (1935-43).
10. Dimitrov, Georgy: outstanding Bulgarian revolutionary and participant of the international workers' movement; in 1934-43 Secretary General of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.
11. People's Aid, Lithuanian People's Aid Association: massive, non-party organization, founded in 1924, for the succour of revolutionary political prisoners and their families.
12. The decision of the Government referred to was made after the President of the Republic, contrary to the will of the Government, crossed the border into Germany and rejected the Government's proposal to return to Lithuania and resume his post. He declared to the government delegation sent by Prime Minister Merkys and to the German authorities his decision to remain in Germany.

Article 72 of the Constitution of Lithuania referred to says: "In case of death of the President of the Republic or his resignation, until a new President of the Republic is elected and assumes the functions of governing, the Prime Minister acts as head of State. While acting as head of State, the Prime Minister has all the powers of the President of the Republic".

13. At 9.40 on June 15, 1940, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister Urbšys and the Lithuanian Minister to the USSR Natkevičius handed the Soviet Government a note to the effect that Lithuania met

the demands made by the Soviet Union. Upon receiving this reply, the Soviet Government proposed to the Lithuanian Government to hold a meeting at the Gudagojus railway station on the border between representatives of the military commands of both sides to discuss the questions pertaining to the entry of additional Red Army units into Lithuania. The signed agreement stipulated that the representatives of the Lithuanian Army Command, in view of the decision taken by the Lithuanian Government to permit the stationing of additional Red Army units on Lithuanian territory, have agreed to comply with the request made by the Soviet Army Command and provide it with transport facilities to carry fuel and other freights from the points of crossing to the points where the Red Army units were stationed on the territory of Lithuania, accounts for transport facilities being paid on their presentation to the USSR Trade Delegation in Lithuania. It was also agreed upon to concede the Soviet Army Command the right, through the mediation of respective Lithuanian authorities, to hire workers from among the population of Lithuania. The agreement was signed by Div Gen Vitkauskas on the Lithuanian side and Gen Pavlov on the Soviet side. On June 15, 1940, Commander of the Army Div Gen Vitkauskas and Chief of the General Staff Div Gen Pundzevičius issued an order of the day to the Army to accord a friendly meeting to the additional Red Army units entering Lithuania. The order read: "The marching Soviet army is to be accorded all the rules of courtesy and friendship such as were accorded to this army previously. Division Commanders organize the meeting within their respective Commands by sending officers to meet the marching columns and report to the unit commanders, while in the more important directions Division Commanders themselves take part in the meeting ceremonies"

14. Paleckis, Justas (1899): journalist, an outstanding participant of the anti-fascist movement; in 1926 director of the Lithuanian News Agency (Elta); president of the Lithuanian Populist Youth Association; member of the Central Board of the Free-thinkers Ethnic Culture Society; in 1934 editor of a liberal newspaper *Laiko žodis*; from 1937 member of the Anti-fascist People's Front Committee. He contributed to the banned anti-fascist periodicals; for taking part in anti-fascist demonstrations, he was sent to a forced labour camp.
15. Krėvė-Mickevičius, Vincas (1882-1954): prominent writer; in 1922-40 professor at Kaunas University; dean of the Department of Humanities for many years; in 1939-40, president of the Lithuanian Writers Union; editor of literary and academic journals. For some time he belonged to the Lithuanian Nationalist Union; after the 1926 coup d'état, however, he broke with the Nationalists and joined the opposition.
16. Vitkauskas, Vincas (1890-1965): Division General; in 1927-40 worked in the Lithuanian General Staff; in January, 1940, was appointed Commander of the Lithuanian Army.
17. Pakarklis, Povilas (1902-1955): lawyer and historian; in 1934-35, assistant secretary at the Court of Appeal; in 1935-40, deputy prosecutor at the Kaunas Circuit Court. He opposed the dic-

tatorial regime of Smetona, hated the Nazis and their policy, sympathized with the Soviet Union.

18. Galvanauskas, Ernestas (1882-1967): popular public figure and politician; in 1919, Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Trade and Industry; in 1922 Prime Minister; in 1923-24 Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs; in 1924-27 Lithuanian Minister in London; in 1939-40 Finance Minister. For many years he presided at boards of directors or supervisory bodies of a number of industrial and trade companies; Rector of the Institute of Commerce.
19. Mickis, Matas (1896-1960): agronomist, economist; in 1925-40 worked as agronomist inspector of the Kaunas region; contributed on agricultural and other subjects to newspapers and journals.
20. Koganas, Leonas (1894-1956): physician; studied medicine in Moscow; upon graduation in 1919, took refresher courses in Switzerland, Norway and France; practised medicine in Kaunas and Šiauliai.
21. Gedvilas, Mečys (1901): participant of the revolutionary movement; in 1928-31 editor of the oppositional newspaper *Žemaitis*; in 1931-40 director of the regional Sick Aid Fund in Telsiai; contributed to the Communist and anti-fascist press.

Chapter III

1. Snieckus, Antanas (1903-1974): outstanding figure of the revolutionary movement; First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party for many years.
2. Reference is made to the duration of the Nationalist regime in Lithuania which was established after the 1926 coup d'état.
3. The Seimas was dissolved on April 12, 1927. It was an arbitrary measure taken by the Nationalist Government aimed at liquidating the remnants of democracy. The 1935 peasants' strike, however, and the unrest among the peasantry in general, made the Nationalist Government somewhat review its home policy. Thus it was decided to hold elections to the Seimas. On August 14, 1935, an amended Seimas Electoral Law was promulgated. Shortly before the elections, however, on May 9, 1936, a new Electoral Law was proclaimed, which laid down electoral qualifications and adapted the electoral system to fascist-type models. The 1936 elections to the Seimas were held under the auspices of the Nationalist government authorities. The elected Seimas was a mere tool of the dictatorial presidential power. According to the 1938 Constitution of Lithuania, the legislative and other state powers were exercised exclusively by the President of the Republic.

After the fall of the Nationalist regime, by the Act of the People's Government of July 1, 1940, the Seimas was dissolved and elections to a new Seimas were announced.

4. Working People's Union of Lithuania: an electoral bloc of the working people of Lithuania, led by the Lithuanian Communist Party, formed in July, 1940, during the election campaign to the People's Seimas.

5. Such meetings of the working people were held in other Lithuanian cities and towns as well. The resolutions carried by them called to proclaim Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic, to join the Soviet Union and abolish the capitalist order in Lithuania. They were urgently sent to the People's Government and the People's Seimas then in session.
6. Zeligowski, Lucian: Polish General; by the order of Marshal Józef Piłsudski, the Polish troops under Zeligowski's command occupied Vilnius and the Vilnius region on October 9, 1920.
7. On March 17, 1938, the Polish Government presented the Lithuanian Government with an ultimatum demanding to reestablish diplomatic relations, severed in 1920 after the seizure of Vilnius. Polish troops were concentrated on the Lithuanian border, while in Warsaw and other large cities jingoistic demonstrations took place carrying slogans to occupy Lithuania. The ultimatum was accepted and the demand to establish diplomatic relations was met. In Lithuania the event caused widespread discontent with the capitulatory policy of the Nationalist Government.



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